The Chat

Vol. 88 Winter 2024 No. 1

Carolina Bird Club
www.carolinabirdclub.org

The Quarterly Bulletin of the Carolina Bird Club, Inc.
The Ornithological Society of the Carolinas

THE CHAT

ISSN No. 0009-1987

Quarterly Bulletin of Carolina Bird Club, Inc.

1909 Lakepark Drive, Raleigh NC 27612

Vol. 88 **Winter 2024** **No. 1**

General Field Notes Editors
North Carolina **Christina Harvey**
South Carolina **William Post**

Briefs for the Files **Josh Southern**

Editor **Steve Shultz**
2404 Bristers Spring Way
Apex, NC 27523
chat@carolinabirdclub.org

THE CHAT is published quarterly by the Carolina Bird Club, Inc., 1800 Meadow Avenue, Banner Elk NC 28604. Subscription price $30 per year.

Copyright © 2024 by Carolina Bird Club, Inc. Except for purposes of review, material contained herein may not be reproduced without written permission from the Carolina Bird Club, Inc.

General Field Notes

The Status of Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*) in North Carolina *Steven Shultz and Susan Campbell*.....1

Briefs for the Files

Fall 2023 *Josh Southern*.....4

Historical Records

Additional Nineteenth Century Records for Ivory-billed Woodpecker (*Campephilus principalis*) in South Carolina *Benjamin E. Leese* 22

Fifty Years Ago in The Chat

March 1974 *Steve Shultz*.....24

Cover: Dovekie, 7 Jan 2024, New Hanover County NC.
Photograph by Bob Lewis.

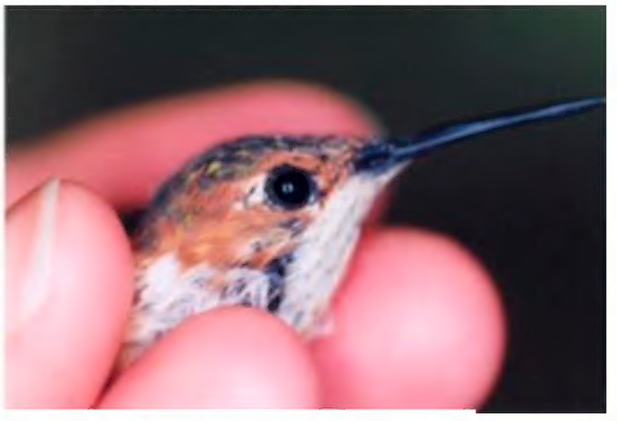
The Status of Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*) in North Carolina

Steven Shultz and Susan Campbell
2404 Bristers Spring Way, Apex NC 27523

Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*) is one of nine species in the genus *Selasphorus* and one of the four migratory species in this genus that nest in the United States (the other five species generally occupy the same range year-round with some altitudinal movement). Allen's Hummingbird breeds in a relatively narrow strip running north along the Pacific Coast from approximately Santa Barbara, California to Oregon and winters to central Mexico. Stray birds have been reported from all Eastern Seaboard states south of New York, in each of the Gulf Coast states, and much of the Mid-west, but records are absent from the Northern and Southern Plains and Intermountain West (eBird).

From a gross visual perspective, female and immature Allen's Hummingbirds closely resemble Rufous Hummingbirds (*Selasphorus rufus*) making field identification challenging. Adult male Allen's Hummingbirds can often be separated from adult male Rufous Hummingbirds by virtue of having a greenish back surrounded by rufous feathering, whereas the adult male Rufous typically shows a solid rufous back. However, some Rufous Hummingbirds show greenish backs, so positive identification of all plumages requires good views of the rectrices, which in combination with wing and tail measurements, are considered diagnostic.

Adult male Rufous Hummingbirds display a prominently notched inner tail feather (rectrix R2) and a relatively broad outer tail feather (R5), whereas Allen's lacks this notch and displays a narrow, pointed R5. Adult female and immature Rufous Hummingbirds also display a prominently notched R2, whereas Allen's lacks this structure.



First state record of Allen's Hummingbird, Manteo, Dare County, 11 Mar 2003. Photograph by Susan Campbell.

Female and immature birds in the genus *Selasphorus* are often noted as "*Selasphorus sp.*" by careful observers due to the similarity of plumages, and certain identification may require in-hand observation of a bird by a licensed bander.

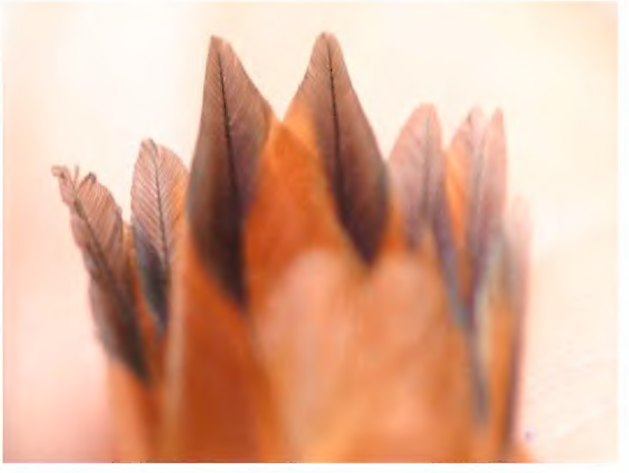
While Rufous Hummingbird has been documented in North Carolina scores of times since the first accepted record in 1976 (Hader and Howard 1977), with multiple birds reported annually, most commonly during the winter months, Allen's Hummingbird has been

documented with only four individuals, with one of these birds returning for consecutive winters.

North Carolina's first documented record of Allen's Hummingbird, an immature male, came from Manteo, Dare County, 19 January – 29 March 2003. This bird was banded by Susan Campbell on 11 March 2003.

The second documented record came nearly 9 years later when Dwayne Martin banded an adult male at Riverbend Park, Catawba County on 19 November 2011.

Second State Record of Allen's Hummingbird, 19 Nov 2011, Riverbend Park, Catawba County NC. Photograph by Michael McCloy.



Spread Tail of Allen's Hummingbird, 11 Jan 2014, Oriental, Pamlico County NC. Photograph by Susan Campbell. Note the lack of notch on R2 and narrow, pointed R5 (outermost tail feather).

The third documented record occurred on the Coastal Plain when a second-calendar-year male was banded on 11 January 2014 at a residence in Oriental, Pamlico County.

The fourth documented record came from the Piedmont region when an adult female was banded on 12 December 2020 at a suburban home in Charlotte, Mecklenburg County. This bird, band number 7100-43777, returned the following year (constituting the fifth state record) and represents the first time that an Allen's Hummingbird is known to have returned to the state in subsequent years.

Allen's Hummingbird remains a very rare, but not unexpected, winter hummingbird in North Carolina, and the similarity to Rufous Hummingbird continues to require careful observation, or in-hand study, for positive identification.

Any wintering hummingbird in the Carolinas is of interest, and reports can be made to Susan Campbell at susan@ncaves.com.

Fourth (2020) and Fifth (2021) State Record Allen's Hummingbird, December 2020, Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, NC. Photograph by Crystal Kolarik.

Allen's Hummingbird, 11 Mar 2003, Manteo, Dare County, NC. Note green back. This bird displayed a very thin outer tail feather (R5) and tapered (not notched) second innermost tail feather (R2).

Literature Cited

eBird. 2023. eBird: An online database of bird distribution and abundance [web application]. eBird, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, New York. Available: http://www.ebird.org.

Hader, Robert J., and Tom Howard, 1977. Probable Rufous Hummingbird at Raleigh, N.C. Chat 41: 70–71.

Did You Know?

Full copies of *The Chat* dating back to the very first issue, March 1937, are available for viewing online. Find these and more at:
https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/chat/

The Chat

BULLETIN OF THE NORTH CAROLINA BIRD CLUB
PUBLISHED AT RALEIGH, N. C.

JOHN H. GREY, JR., EDITOR
1719 PARK DRIVE

VOL I March, 1937 No. 1

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

Josh Southern
203 Hyannis Drive
Holly Springs, NC 27540
joshsouthern79@gmail.com

(All dates Fall 2023, unless otherwise noted)

Briefs for the Files is a seasonal collection of uncommon-to-rare or unusual North and South Carolina bird sightings and events which do not necessarily require a more detailed Field Note or article. Reports of your sightings are due the 20th of the month after the end of the previous season.

Winter	*December 1–February 28*	*due March 20*
Spring	*March 1–May 31*	*due June 20*
Summer	*June 1–July 31*	*due August 20*
Fall	*August 1–November 30*	*due December 20*

Reports may be submitted in any format, but I prefer that you use email, list multiple sightings in taxonomic order (rather than by date or location) and type your report directly into the body of the email. If your sightings are in a file, please copy-and-paste the text into the body of the email, rather than sending an attachment.

Suitable reports for the Briefs include any sightings you feel are unusual, rare, noteworthy, or just plain interesting to you in any way! It is my responsibility to decide which reports merit inclusion in the Briefs.

Please be sure to include details of any rare or hard-to-identify birds.

I rely in part on sightings reported in Carolinabirds. Please don't, however, rely on me to pick up your sightings from Carolinabirds. Instead, please also send your sightings directly to me as described above.

If I feel that your sighting warrants a Field Note, I will contact either you or the appropriate state Field Notes editor. You may, of course, submit your Field Note directly to the editor without going through me.

Abbreviations: **BRC** – Bird Records Committee, **et al.** – and others, **Ft** – Fort, **Ln** – Lane, **m. obs.** – multiple observers, **Mt** – Mount, **NC** – North Carolina, **NWR** – National Wildlife Refuge, **Rd** – Road, **SC** – South Carolina, **SP** – State Park, **WMA** – Wildlife Management Area, **WTP** – Water Treatment Plant

All place names preceding NC or SC, also in italics, are counties.

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck: Four at McKinney Lake Fish Hatchery *Richmond* NC 11 Aug (David McCloy) and four at Archie Elledge WTP *Forsyth* NC 28 Aug (Rob Rogers, et al.) were unusual for those areas.

Ross's Goose: One photographed in flight with Snow Geese at Pea Island NWR *Dare* NC 20 Nov (David True) was the first one reported this fall, though not particularly early. Individuals were reported at six other sites in the Carolinas by the end of November (m. obs.).

Greater White-fronted Goose: 26 in flight over Fort Mill *York* SC 21 Oct (Chris Huffstickler) and six at a pond in *Cleveland* NC 22 Oct (Kade Lockhart) were notable counts for sites in the Piedmont region, also somewhat early.

Brant: An immature individual photographed on the Perquimans River in Hertford *Perquimans* NC 15 Nov (Alicia Leftwich) was unusual for that area, a first for that county.

Tundra Swan: Counts of three in Butner Game Land in southwestern *Granville* NC 19 Nov (Gary Hofing) and over Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 25 Nov (Kevin Markham, Ron Martin, Mark Montazer) were notable, as most sightings made in the Piedmont region are of individuals. Seven on Enka Lake *Buncombe* NC 27 Nov (Blake Cloninger) was a notable count for the mountains.

Eurasian Wigeon: As usual, one to two drakes were seen at Pea Island NWR *Dare* NC in the latter half of fall, this year 21 Oct into winter (Alan MacEachren, m. obs.). A drake photographed among a southbound flock of scoters off Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 21 Nov (Andrew Thornton) was unusual for that site.

Green-winged Teal: 1800 in southbound flight off Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 21 Nov (Andrew Thornton) was a notable count for the ocean.

Canvasback: A hen on Lake Junaluska *Haywood* NC 1 Nov (Jeff Gresko, m. obs.) was rather early for a site in the mountain region.

Common Eider: One in southbound flight over the ocean just south of Salvo *Dare* NC 28 Oct (Michael Gosselin) and two around the jetty at Ft Macon SP *Carteret* NC 3 Nov (Ron Martin) were somewhat early.

Harlequin Duck: An individual hen was seen around the Bonner Bridge Pier on the southern side of Oregon Inlet *Dare* NC 2-5 Nov (Graham Laing, m. obs.) and at nearby Oregon Inlet Fishing Center 19-21 Nov (Jacob Farmer, m. obs.).

Surf Scoter: Small flocks were reported on several inland lakes in November. Counts included four on Lake Norman *Mecklenburg* NC 5 Nov (Patty Masten, et al.), two on Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 7 Nov (Ron Martin), two on Buckhorn Reservoir *Wilson* NC 8 Nov (Ricky Davis), three on Falls Lake *Durham* NC 10 Nov (Martin, et al.), four on Lake Julian *Buncombe* NC 11 Nov (Walter Somerville, m. obs.), six on Lake Robinson *Greenville* SC 12 Nov (Laura Harris, m. obs.), four on Salem Lake *Forsyth* NC 20 Nov (David & Susan Disher, m. obs.), 12 on Moss Lake *Cleveland* NC 20 Nov (Marbry Hopkins, m. obs.), and four on Falls Lake *Durham* and *Wake* NC 21 Nov (John Lynch, m. obs.).

White-winged Scoter: Inland sightings included three on Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 11 Nov (Mark Montazer, Ron Martin, et al.), two on Falls Lake *Durham* NC 12 Nov (Ricky Davis), and two on Lake Brandt *Guilford* NC 25 Nov (Andrew Thornton, m. obs.).

Black Scoter: 12000 in southbound flight off Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 21 Nov (Andrew Thornton) was a remarkable count. Inland sightings, all in NC, included seven on Lake Crabtree *Wake* 23-24 Oct (Len O'Toole, m. obs.), seven on Ecusta Pond *Transylvania* 11 Nov (Michael Plauché, et al.), four on Lake Townsend *Guilford* 11 Nov (Elizabeth & Henry Link, m. obs.), two on Mountain Island Lake *Mecklenburg* 15-20 Nov (Kevin Metcalf, m. obs.), one on Lake Julian *Buncombe* 20 Nov (Jay Wherley), three on Falls Lake *Durham* 24 Nov (Noah Rokoske, et al.), two on Lake Brandt *Guilford* 25 Nov (Andrew Thornton, m. obs.), and three on Mayo Lake *Person* 26 Nov (Jeff Blalock).

Long-tailed Duck: Inland sightings involved one on Falls Lake *Durham* NC 20 Nov (Dan Kaplan, m. obs.), one on Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 20 Nov (Teresa Noel, m. obs.), two on Lake Robinson *Greenville* SC 25 Nov (Simon Harvey, et al.), and three on Jordan Lake 25 Nov (Steve Shultz, m. obs.). Three off the pier at Myrtle Beach SP *Horry* SC 28 Nov (Scott Hartley) were notable for that area.

Common Merganser: A family group of four on the Linville River near Crossnore *Avery* NC 20 Aug (Clyde Sorenson) may have nested in that area. One on Lake Wylie *York* SC 20 Aug (Cindy Stacy) was unusual for that area, likely wandering from its nesting grounds in the NC mountains.

American Flamingo: Multiple reports, all pending review by the respective state BRCs, were made after the remnants of Hurricane Idalia passed through the SC coastal plain 31 Aug. Reports made along the SC coast included two on Bulls Island at Cape Romain NWR *Charleston* 1-2 Sep (Martin Blagdurn, m. obs.), one on Bulls Island 3 Sep (m. obs.) through 24 Oct (Mike Resch), one on Pawleys Island *Georgetown* 25 Sep (Ritch Lilly, m. obs.), one at Santee Coastal Reserve *Charleston* 26 Sep (*fide* Felicia Sanders), and two at Santee Coastal Reserve 4 Oct (Kevin Kubach). In *Dare* NC, a remarkable number of birds were

American Flamingos, 2 Sep 2023, Pea Island NWR, Dare County, NC. Photograph by Jeff Lewis.

seen at Pea Island NWR and in the adjacent Pamlico Sound through much of the fall. After 11 were first discovered 2 Sep (Jeff Lewis), up to 17 were seen in that area from mid-September to mid-October (m. obs.), with ten remaining through 20 Nov (Mike DeSarno), and one remaining until 27 Nov (Nancy Larrabee).

Eared Grebe: Individuals were seen and photographed on the sound in Topsail Beach *Pender* NC 15 Oct (Blair & Elizabeth Clark), on a pond in Waves *Dare* NC 5-21 Nov (Karen Lebing, m. obs.), on Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 24 Nov into winter (Lincoln Martin, m. obs.), and on Salem Lake *Guilford* NC 29 Nov (John Haire, Paul Nielson).

Common Ground Dove: One photographed at Conestee Nature Preserve *Greenville* SC 4 Oct (Ylva Byars) was a great find for upstate SC.

White-winged Dove: Individuals were reported at six sites along the SC coast 14 Sep into winter (m. obs.).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: An adult male at Riverbend Park *Catawba* NC 6-7 Nov (Dwayne Martin, m. obs.) was rather late for a site so far from the coast.

Black-chinned Hummingbird: Individual immature males were seen and photographed visiting a feeder in Southern Shores *Dare* NC 7-9 Oct (Jeff Lewis, m. obs.) and in Sneads Ferry *Onslow* NC 17 Nov (Gilbert Grant).

Rufous Hummingbird: The banded adult female that has wintered at Riverbend Park *Catawba* NC for the past three years returned to that site 5 Aug (Dwayne Martin).

Broad-tailed Hummingbird: Pending review by the NCBRC is the report with photographs of an apparent immature female Broad-tailed Hummingbird visiting a feeder in northwestern *Union* NC 25 Nov through 7 Dec (Janet Jacobs, m. obs.), captured for measurement and banding 5 Dec (Dwayne Martin). If accepted, the report would provide the second record for NC.

Broad-tailed Hummingbird, 1 Dec 2023, Union County, NC. Photograph by Ian McDonald.

Common Gallinule: One at Osceola Lake *Henderson* NC 17 Sep through 3 Oct (G. Ivey, m. obs.) was unusual for the mountain region.

Limpkin: This species made an unprecedented northward dispersal into the eastern United States this fall. In NC, individuals were seen at Lake Norman in *Iredell* 12 Aug (John Carter), at Tanglewood Park *Forsyth* 20 Aug (David Collins), at the upper end of Jordan Lake *Chatham* 22 Aug through 1 Oct (Ron Martin, m. obs.), at Mountain Creek Park *Catawba* 25 Aug through 30 Sep (Jessica Sebastian, m. obs.), at Merchants Millpond SP *Gates* 4 Sep through 9 Oct (Floyd & Signa Williams, m. obs.), at Jackson Park *Henderson* 8 Sep through 15 Oct (Wayne Forsythe, m. obs.), at Lake Junaluska *Haywood* 21 Sep and 1 Oct (Joshua Crisp, m. obs.), at Lake Reidsville *Rockingham* 26 Sep (Kim Forrester), at Biltmore Estate *Buncombe* 29 Sep through 1 Oct (m. obs.), at Lake Waccamaw *Columbus* 8 Oct (Rosemary Dorsey, m. obs.), at Lake Rhodhiss *Caldwell* 14-15 Oct (m. obs.), at Butner Game Land *Durham* 29 Oct (Iza Wojciechowska), again at Lake Junaluska 9 Nov into winter (m. obs.), and at White Pines Nature Preserve *Chatham* 15 Nov (Colleen Spiller). In inland SC, individuals were seen at Eighteenmile Creek *Anderson* 4 Aug through 10 Sep (Kevin Kubach, m. obs.), along the Catawba River in *York* 26 Aug (Bobby O'Brien), at Beidler Forest Audubon Center *Dorchester* 27 Aug (Matt Johnson), at Yawkey Wildlife Center *Georgetown* 5 Sep (Jamie Dozier), along the Tugaloo River in *Oconee* 8-13 Oct (Joe & Liz Dunkleman, m. obs.), and at Savannah NWR *Jasper* 4-6 Nov (Cindy Groff, m. obs.). Counts of two were made near St Stephen *Berkeley* SC 7 Aug (Cynthia Damon), at Mountain Creek Park *Catawba* NC 10-27 Sep (Dwayne Martin, m. obs.), and at the upper end of Falls Lake *Durham* NC 18 Nov (Susan Pratt). A family group of six including adult and immature birds near Sparkleberry Landing at the upper end of Lake Marion *Sumter* SC 11 Oct (Ron Ahle) was suggestive of nesting in that area. Eleven around the known nesting site in southern *Horry* SC 30 Sep (Irvin Pitts, et al.) was a notable count.

American Avocet: Four on Lake Louise at 2900' elevation in southeastern *Alleghany* NC 13 Aug (Catherine Sweeney) were unusual for the mountain region and a first for that county. Other inland sightings included three on Salem Lake *Forsyth* NC 13 Aug (Harvey Clodfelter, Jesse Haaf, m. obs.), one at Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 30 Aug through 16 Sep (Gary Hofing, m. obs.), one at Lake Junaluska *Haywood* NC 18 Sep (m. obs.), up to 11 in the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake *Durham* NC 21-29 Oct (David Pennebaker, Dan Kaplan, m. obs.), three at Buckhorn Reservoir *Wilson* NC 29-30 Oct (Ann Brice, m. obs.), and one on Lake James *Burke* NC 9 Nov (Caroline Martin).

Black-bellied Plover: Individuals near the dam on W. Kerr Scott Reservoir *Wilkes* NC 23-24 Sep (Steve Dowlan, Maxwell Ramey, m. obs.) and in flight over Lake Norman *Mecklenburg* NC 11 Nov (Patty Masten, Rob Van Epps, et al.) were unusual for those areas.

American Golden-Plover: Individuals seen at a golf course in Chapel Hill *Orange* NC 31 Aug through 2 Sep (Karen Hogan, m. obs.) and at Hemingway WTP *Williamsburg* SC 14-24 Sep (Jay Chandler, m. obs.) were firsts for those counties. 21 in an agricultural field along Shirley Farm Rd in *Beaufort* NC 11 Nov (Trevor Sleight) was a notable count.

Piping Plover: Individuals at three sites around Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC, in the White Oak Creek arm 28-29 Aug (Mark DiGiovanni, m. obs.), in the Northeast Creek arm 8-9 Oct (Mark Montazer, m. obs.), and in the New Hope Creek arm 17-18 Nov (Matt Spangler, m. obs.), were notable inland.

Upland Sandpiper: "Uppies" were reported at about a dozen grassy sites in August and early September. Counts included three at Vandemark Sod *Nash* NC 1 Aug (Ricky Davis), two in the Dalzell unit of Modern Turf *Sumter* SC 1-20 Aug (Mark Domincovich, m. obs.), five at the airport in Manteo *Dare* NC 19-21 Aug (Karen Hogan, Teresa Noel, m. obs.), and seven at Vandemark Sod 30 Aug (Davis). One in Salvo *Dare* NC 23-25 Sep (Karen Lebing, m. obs.) was somewhat late.

Whimbrel: One seen and photographed in a grassy field next to a gas station in southeastern *Nash* NC 2-3 Sep (Bruce Young, m. obs.) was a notable find inland, likely related to the passage of the remnants of Hurricane Idalia.

Long-billed Curlew: On the eastern end of Shackleford Banks *Carteret* NC, one was seen 26 Aug into winter (Roger Shaw, m. obs.) and two were photographed together there 31 Oct (Ann Stinely). Individuals seen and photographed on Parris Island *Beaufort* SC 16 Aug (Steven Guy), at Hatteras Inlet *Dare* NC 12 Sep (Nathan Gatto), at Bogue Inlet *Carteret* NC 13-14 Oct (Ed Phillips, m. obs.), and in northbound flight over Waves *Dare* NC 9 Nov (Karen Lebing) were unusual for those sites.

Bar-tailed Godwit: Individuals, likely the same individuals seen at these sites in previous years, were seen on the eastern end of Kiawah Island *Charleston* SC 14 Aug (Corie Latta) through 14 Sep (Nathan Ukens) but not thereafter, and on East Shackleford Banks *Carteret* NC 30 Oct (Marty Wall) intermittently into winter (m. obs.).

Ruddy Turnstone: Individuals in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 30 Aug through 2 Sep (Gary Hofing, m. obs.) and at Buckhorn Reservoir *Wilson* NC 8 Sep (Ann Stinely) and 18 Sep (Ricky Davis) were good finds inland.

Stilt Sandpiper: Farthest inland this fall were three at Dobbins Farm *Anderson* SC 23-25 Aug (Steve Patterson, m. obs.), one to two along the Yadkin River Greenway in Wilkesboro *Wilkes* NC 25-27 Aug (Lori Arent, m. obs.), one to two along Hooper Ln *Henderson* NC 27-29 Aug (Vicky Burke, m. obs.), and two to three in southwestern *Oconee* SC 17 Sep (Joe Dunkleman, m. obs.).

Dunlin: 97 in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 31 Oct (Ron Martin) was a notable count for an inland site. One at Lake Junaluska *Haywood* NC 3 Nov (Jeff Gresko, et al.) was notable for that area of the mountains.

Baird's Sandpiper: This species made a noticeable migratory movement through the Carolinas in late August. Sightings included one in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 21-31 Aug (Jonathan Cantrell, Spike Millington, m. obs.), one at Simpson Research Station *Anderson* SC 23-25 Aug (Steve Patterson, m. obs.), one at Lake Crabtree *Wake* NC 26-31 Aug (Mitchell Dart, m. obs.), one in Roaring River *Wilkes* NC 27 Aug (Dale Reynolds), three at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln *Henderson* NC 27-31 Aug (Mike Resch, Kristin Schrode, m. obs.), and one the Super Sod farm in *Orangeburg* SC 2-9 Sep (John Cox, m. obs.). Interestingly, no later reports were made this fall.

Baird's Sandpiper,
24 Aug 2023, Clemson University Simpson Research Station,
Anderson County, SC.
Photograph by Imtiaz Hague.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: Sightings were made at about a dozen sites scattered across the Carolinas 15 Aug through 6 Oct, with a peak in early September. One along the Savannah River just below Russell Dam *Abbeville* and *McCormick* SC 28 Sep through 1 Oct (Steve Patterson, m. obs.) was unusual for that area. One to three along Hooper Ln *Henderson* NC 20-31 Aug (Mike Resch, m. obs.) was the only report from the mountain region.

Solitary Sandpiper: One at Jackson Park *Henderson* NC 23 Oct (Wayne Forsythe, Rich Ziegler) was late for a site in the mountain region.

Willet: One at Buckhorn Reservoir *Wilson* NC 18 Aug (Ricky Davis) was a good find inland.

Wilson's Phalarope: Individuals were seen at ten sites this fall, 5 Aug through 20 Sep—at Buckhorn Reservoir *Wilson* NC 5 Aug (Sandy Cash, Mel Green), at Pea Island NWR *Dare* NC 8-19 Aug (m. obs.), at Huntington Beach SP *Georgetown* SC 11 Aug (Wendy Allen), at Savannah NWR *Jasper* SC 12-24 Aug (Matthew Tozer, m. obs.), near Farrington

Point at Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 18-19 Aug (Ron Martin, m. obs.), at a pond in northeastern *Spartanburg* SC 21 Aug (Simon Harvey, et al.), in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake 21-31 Aug (Jonathan Cantrell, Spike Millington, m. obs.), in Corolla *Currituck* NC 22 Aug (Jeff Lewis, m. obs.), in southwestern *Oconee* SC 17 Sep (Joe Dunkleman, m. obs.), and in northern *Beaufort* SC 20 Sep (Jake Zadik).

Red-necked Phalarope: Sightings related to the passage Hurricane Idalia included 15 around Cape Point *Dare* NC 31 Aug (Daniel Irons), two along the Yadkin River Greenway *Wilkes* NC 31 Aug (Jane Will, m. obs.), one at Oakland Plantation Turf Farm *Bladen* NC 31 Aug (Ed Corey, John Lynch), and two at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access) *Jasper* SC 1 Sep (Steve Calver). One at Edisto Beach SP *Colleton* SC 23 Sep (Teresa Kopec) was likely forced down by Tropical Storm Ophelia. One in the White Oak Creek arm of Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 9 Oct (Fleeta Chauvigne, Ron Martin, Mark Montazer, m. obs.) was unusual for an inland site away from the passage of a tropical storm.

Red Phalarope: One seen and photographed at Pea Island NWR *Dare* NC 25-28 Aug (Karen Lebing, m. obs.) was notable onshore.

South Polar Skua: One was seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras *Dare* NC 5 Aug, and two were seen together on a pelagic trip out of Wanchese *Dare* NC 27 Aug (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.).

Parasitic Jaeger: A dark-morph individual seen and photographed over Lake Norman *Mecklenburg* NC following the passage of Hurricane Idalia 31 Aug (Steve Coggin, et al.) was an excellent find inland.

Black-legged Kittiwake: Sightings involved a first-winter bird at Lake Crabtree *Wake* NC 5 Nov (Harry LeGrand, m. obs.), a first-winter bird at Myrtle Beach SP *Georgetown* SC 9-11 Nov (Alice Rourke Belanger, m. obs.), two in flight off Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 20 Nov (Andrew Thornton), a first-winter bird off Bogue Inlet Pier *Carteret* NC 22 Nov (Trenton Voytko), and an adult at Falls Lake *Wake* NC 26 Nov (Lynn Erla Beegle, Jeri Smart).

Sabine's Gull: Juvenile individuals seen on Lake Norman *Mecklenburg* and *Lincoln* NC 16 Sep (Greg Hays, Dennis Kent, et al.) through 18 Sep (m. obs.) and on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras *Dare* NC 17 Sep (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.) were great finds.

Black-headed Gull: An adult, likely the same individual seen there in recent winters, returned to Mason Inlet *New Hanover* NC by 5 Nov (Brian Strassburger).

Franklin's Gull: This species was well-reported again this fall. Sightings involved one at Mason Inlet *New Hanover* NC 26-28 Sep (Jamie Adams, m. obs.), one on Waites Island *Horry* SC 10-11 Oct (Chris Hill, m. obs.), one on Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 18-19 Oct (Karen Hogan, Teresa Noel), one on Falls Lake in *Durham* NC 9 Nov (Dan Kaplan), one on Badin Lake *Montgomery* NC 9 Nov (Paul Nielson), one in Beaufort *Carteret* NC 10 Nov (Marty Wall), one on Lake Junaluska *Haywood* NC 11 Nov (Kirk Gardner, et al.), two on Jordan Lake 17 Nov (Mark Montazer), four on Lake Norman *Mecklenburg* NC 18 Nov

(Greg Hays, Dennis Kent, et al.), and three on Jordan Lake 18 Nov (Ron Martin, Montazer) with one continuing through 25 Nov (Ricky Davis).

Iceland Gull: A first-winter bird photographed on the beach near Cape Point *Dare* NC 12 Nov (Michael Gosselin) was somewhat early.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: A first-winter bird seen and photographed on Lake Norman in *Lincoln* NC 7-8 Oct (Patty Masten, m. obs.) was rather early for a site in the Piedmont.

Sooty Tern: A juvenile in eastbound flight off Cape Point *Dare* NC 17 Aug (Daniel Irons) was notable from shore away from the passage of a tropical storm. 71 on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras *Dare* NC 19 Aug (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.) and 99 on a pelagic trip out of Wanchese *Dare* NC 27 Aug (Patteson, Sutherland, et al.) were notable counts. Four seen from Cape Point *Dare* NC 31 Aug (Irons) were likely displaced by the remnants of Hurricane Idalia.

Bridled Tern: Related to the passage of Hurricane Idalia were seven off Cape Point *Dare* NC 31 Aug (Daniel Irons) and a juvenile on Bald Head Island *Brunswick* NC 31 Aug (Bill Fuchs).

Roseate Tern: 17, all adults, around Cape Point *Dare* NC 3 Aug (Daniel Irons) was a remarkable count. Individuals or small groups were reported at multiple sites along the Outer Banks from summer through 22 Sep (Irons, m. obs.).

Common Tern: One photographed on Lake Norman *Mecklenburg* NC 26 Nov (Jeff Lemons, Patty Masten, et al.) was quite late for a site so far from the coast.

Arctic Tern: Pending review by the NCBRC is the report of an Arctic Tern seen and photographed over Lake Crabtree *Wake* NC 31 Oct (Chip Davis, Ed Corey).

Sandwich Tern (Cayenne race): A "Cayenne Tern" was seen and photographed at Cape Point *Dare* NC 14 Oct (Andrew Thornton, m. obs.) and 6 Nov (Brian Patteson).

Elegant Tern: Pending review by the NCBRC is the report of an Elegant Tern on the beach on the southern side of Oregon Inlet *Dare* NC 14 Sep (Daniel Irons). If accepted, the report would provide the first record of this pacific-coast tern anywhere in the Carolinas.

Red-throated Loon: One on Falls Lake in *Durham* NC 20 Oct (Ron Martin) was quite early for an inland site. Other inland sightings involved one on Falls Lake *Durham* NC 12-19 Nov (Ricky Davis, m. obs.), one on Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 5-20 Nov (Fleeta Chauvigne, Mark Montazer, m. obs.), one on Lake Townsend *Guilford* NC 22-30 Nov (Heather Buttonow, m. obs.), two on Jordan Lake 22-29 Nov (m. obs.), one on Lake Tillery *Montgomery* and *Stanly* NC 29 Nov (Martina Nordstrand), and three, an amazing inland count, on Jordan Lake 30 Nov into winter (Martin).

Pacific Loon: Pending review by the NCBRC is the inland report with photographs of a Pacific Loon on Lake Lure *Rutherford* NC 22 Nov (Mike Resch, m. obs.).

White-faced Storm-Petrel: Individuals were seen on pelagic trips out of Hatteras *Dare* NC 4 Aug and 5 Aug (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.).

Trindade Petrel: Six on a pelagic trip out of Wanchese *Dare* NC 24 Aug (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.) was a fantastic one-day total. On other pelagic trips out of *Dare* NC, two were seen 4 Aug, and individuals were seen 25 Aug and 27 Aug (Patteson, Sutherland, et al.).

Fea's Petrel: Individuals were seen on pelagic trips out of Wanchese *Dare* NC 22 Aug and 28 Aug (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.).

Cory's Shearwater: 50 in southbound flight off Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 22 Aug (Andrew Thornton) was a notable from-shore count for a site away from Cape Point.

Great Shearwater: 602 on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras *Dare* NC 5 Aug (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.) was a noteworthy count. One seen in flight off Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 18 Nov (Sage Church, et al.) was unusual from shore so late in the season.

Audubon's Shearwater: 383 on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras *Dare* NC 7 Oct (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.) was an amazing total.

Wood Stork: Farthest inland this fall were four near Lake Hartwell *Anderson* SC 7-13 Aug (Kevin Kubach, m. obs.), two in southwestern *Oconee* SC 20-21 Aug (Joe Dunkleman, m. obs.), and six in the Buffalo Creek arm of Kings Mountain Reservoir *Cleveland* NC 5-8 Oct (Anita & Bill Hooker, m. obs.). 49 in flight over Yates Mill County Park *Wake* NC 31 Aug (John Lynch) was a notable count for that area.

Magnificent Frigatebird: Pending review by the SCBRC is the unusual inland report of a Magnificent Frigatebird seen from a hawkwatch site on Sassafras Mountain *Pickens* SC 15 Nov (Betsy Lewis, et al.). The sighting is not without precedent, however, as a similar sighting was made in neighboring *Transylvania* NC 9 Jan 2021. If accepted, the report would provide the first inland record for SC.

Masked Booby: Individuals were seen in *Dare* NC on four dates in August—on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras 4 Aug (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.), from Cape Point 17 Aug (Daniel Irons), and on pelagic trips out of Wanchese 27 Aug and 28 Aug (Patteson, Sutherland, et al.).

Brown Booby: A subadult bird found atop a chicken coop in *Lexington* SC 2 Aug was taken to a wildlife rehabilitator (*fide* Christian Feldt). An immature bird seen in flight off Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 18 Nov (Sage Church, et al.) was rather late.

Great Cormorant: One continued at Beaufort Inlet *Carteret* NC from summer throughout the fall (Marty Wall, m. obs.). Individuals began showing up at other traditional wintering sites in early November (m. obs.).

Brown Pelican: Immature individuals on Lake Wylie *York* SC 19-20 Aug (John Demchak, m. obs.) and in the Second Creek arm of High Rock Lake *Rowan* NC 23-29 Sep (Matthew Withrow, m. obs.) were notable inland.

Least Bittern: One seen at Ecusta Pond *Transylvania* NC 29 Oct (Michael Plauché) was locally unusual, late for a site in the mountain region.

Tricolored Heron: One at the upper end of Parr Shoals Reservoir *Fairfield* SC 3-17 Aug (Kevin Kubach, m. obs.) was unusual for that area.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: Immature individuals along the Johns River in *Burke* NC 6 Oct (Thea Sinclair), at Beaverdam Creek WMA *Anderson* SC 8 Oct (Jean & G. Robert Askew), and in *Cleveland* NC 8-9 Oct (Anita & Bill Hooker) were somewhat late for the western Piedmont.

Glossy Ibis: One in the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake *Durham* NC 13-29 Oct (Noah Rokoske, m. obs.) was late for a site in the Piedmont region.

Roseate Spoonbill: The post-breeding irruption that began in July continued through the first half of fall. Inland sightings included one in northwestern *Durham* NC 15-16 Aug (Jessie Birckhead, m. obs.), one at the upper end of Falls Lake *Durham* and *Granville* NC 19 Aug through 22 Sep (Mike Manetz, m. obs.), one at the upper end of Parr Shoals Reservoir *Fairfield* SC 29 Aug (Kevin Kubach), one at Lake Lynn *Wake* NC 31 Aug (Ron Martin, m. obs.), one at Wiggins Mill Reservoir *Wilson* NC from summer through 21 Sep (Ricky Davis), two at the upper end of Falls Lake *Durham* and *Granville* NC 23-27 Sep (Sarah Connette, Ben Graham, m. obs.), and one in the Buffalo Creek arm of Lake Murray *Newberry* SC 25 Sep (Pam Tuten). Two in the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake *Durham* NC 13-15 Oct (Noah Rokoske, m. obs.) were rather late for the Piedmont region. Farthest north along the coast was one seen at Pea Island NWR *Dare* NC 29 Oct into winter (m. obs.).

Swallow-tailed Kite: Post-breeding wanderers were reported inland to the foothills region in the first half of August. One over King's Bridge Conservation Area *Henderson* NC 12 Aug (Mathew Murphy, m. obs.) was notable for the mountain region. Up to four over Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden *Gaston* NC 5-19 Aug (Keith Camburn, m. obs.) were notable for that area. One seen over Buxton *Dare* NC 29 Sep through 21 Oct (Steve Vaughn, Jan Willis, m. obs.) was very late.

Golden Eagle: Juvenile individuals were seen over western *Haywood* NC 7 Nov (Chris Kelly) and over YMCA Camp Harrison *Wilkes* NC where photographed 18 Nov (Richard Gray, et al.).

Mississippi Kite: As usual, this species was reported far inland of its breeding range during post-breeding dispersal, August through early September. One seen over Rose Creek Campground Macon NC 13 Aug (Diana Doyle) was unusual for the southwestern corner of NC. 17 over Irma's Produce Fields along I-40 in McDowell NC 20 Aug (Aaron Steed, et al.) was a good count for the foothills region.

Swainson's Hawk: A light-morph juvenile seen and photographed over the southern end of Oregon Inlet *Dare* NC 16 Sep (Jeff Lewis, et al.) was very unusual for the Outer Banks, also quite early. Less unusual was one seen in flight over Alligator River NWR *Dare* NC 1 Nov (Andrew Thornton, m. obs.).

Swainson's Hawk, 16 Sep 2023, Dare County, NC. Photograph by Jeff Lewis.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: One at Eno River SP *Durham* NC 9 Sep (Larry Chen, Sarah Toner) was early for a site outside of the mountains.

Ash-throated Flycatcher: This vagrant was extremely well reported along the Atlantic coast this fall, with a corresponding number of sightings made in the Carolinas. Sightings made at sites along or near the coast included one at Savannah NWR *Jasper* SC 6 Nov (Stephen Ramsden), one at Alligator River NWR *Dare* NC 15 Nov (Robert Lethco) and 27 Nov (David True), two at North River Farms *Carteret* NC 21 Nov (Marty Wall, et al.), and one in Kill Devil Hills *Dare* NC 30 Nov (Rachel Veal). Inland sightings, all pending review by the respective state BRCs, involved individuals seen and photographed along Mid-Pines Rd *Wake* NC 12 Nov (Jeremy Wrenn), at Chantilly Ecological Sanctuary *Mecklenburg* NC 13 Nov (Cody Little, m. obs.), along Hayes Rd in *Greenville* SC 14 Nov (Laura Harris), and at Guilford County Farm along Howerton Rd *Guilford* NC 24-27 Nov (Tom Baker, m. obs.).

Tropical Kingbird: Pending review by the NCBRC is the report of an apparent Tropical Kingbird seen and photographed by many, heard vocalizing by some, at Mackay Island NWR *Currituck* NC 13 Oct (Tracy Tate) through 6 Nov (Stacy & Natalie Barbour).

Cassin's Kingbird: Pending review by the SCBRC is the report with excellent photographs of an apparent Cassin's Kingbird in north-central *Anderson* SC 10 Nov (Walter Davenport). If accepted, the report would provide SC its first record of this southwestern *Tyrannus* species.

Putative Cassin's Kingbird, 10 Nov 2023, Anderson County, SC. Photograph by Walter Davenport.

Western Kingbird: Individuals seen and photographed along Mid-Pines Rd *Wake* NC 28-29 Sep (Jermey Wrenn, m. obs.) and at Tanglewood Park *Forsyth* NC 12 Oct (Johnathon Barnett, m. obs.) were great finds for the Piedmont region. Individuals seen and photographed at the dam on Lake Marion *Clarendon* SC 25 Nov (John Becker) and at a horse pasture northeast of Merritt *Pamlico* NC 25 Nov through 2 Dec (Jacob Clark, m. obs.) were unusual for those somewhat-inland areas. Along or near the coast, individuals were reported at nine sites 6 Aug through 29 Oct (m. obs.).

Gray Kingbird: Individuals were photographed at Huntington Beach SP *Georgetown* SC 15 Sep (Wendy Allen) and at Hatteras Point *Dare* NC 24 Sep (Daniel Irons).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: Two distinct individuals were seen and photographed in SC in November—an adult along Gum Swamp Rd in *Aiken* 3 Nov (Matt Malin, m. obs.) and an immature bird at Ft Moultrie *Charleston* 26 Nov through 1 Dec (Craig Watson, m. obs.).

Fork-tailed Flycatcher: Pending review by the NCBRC is the report of a Fork-tailed Flycatcher at Run Hill State Natural Area *Dare* NC 26 Sep (Daniel Irons). If accepted, the report would provide the sixth record for NC.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Individuals were reported from about a dozen sites in the western half of the Carolinas this fall, mainly mid-August through mid-September.

Gray Flycatcher: Pending review by the NCBRC is the report with photographs of a Gray Flycatcher at Cape Lookout *Carteret* NC 8 Oct (Marty Wall, et al.). If accepted, the report would provide NC its second record of this *Empidonax* flycatcher from the western United States.

Say's Phoebe: Pending review by the NCBRC is the report with photographs of a Say's Phoebe at Jackson Park *Henderson* NC 19 Sep (Paul Aaron, Karen Hamblett). If accepted, the report would provide the first record of this species in the mountain region. Another

individual was photographed in the Voice of America Game Land *Beaufort* NC 10 Oct (Trevor Sleight)

Bell's Vireo: Two were mist-netted and banded on the western end of Kiawah Island *Charleston* SC this fall—first-year individuals 6 Sep and 20 Sep (Aaron Given, et al.). One was briefly seen on the southern side of Oregon Inlet Dare NC 25 Sep (Daniel Irons).

Yellow-throated Vireo: One photographed in Buxton Woods *Dare* NC 18 Nov (Michael Gosselin, et al.) was quite late.

Philadelphia Vireo: Sightings, most made in the western half of the Carolinas, fell between 3 Sep and 24 Oct, peaking in late September.

Red-eyed Vireo: Individuals photographed in Beaufort *Carteret* NC 3 Nov (Marty Wall) and in southern *Clarendon* SC 7 Nov (John Becker) were late to depart.

Yellow-green Vireo: Pending review by the SCBRC is the report with photographs of an apparent Yellow-green Vireo mist-netted at the banding station on the eastern end of Kiawah Island *Charleston* SC 15 Oct (Kristin Attinger, Wentao Yang, et al.). If accepted, the report would provide the second record for SC, the first a bird mist-netted at that same site in fall 2016.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: Four at Yates Mill County Park *Wake* NC 26 Nov (Bob Oberfelder, m. obs.) was a notable count for late November.

Purple Martin: One photographed over the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 8 Oct (Mark Montazer) was late for a site in the Piedmont.
Cliff Swallow: 300 over an agricultural area in southeastern *Union* NC 7 Aug (Dennis Kent) was a notable count.

Cave Swallow: Three were seen in flight with Barn Swallows over the beach near Cape Point *Dare* NC 21 Oct (Taylor Piephoff).

Red-breasted Nuthatch: One photographed in a yard in northern *Chatham* NC 9-10 Aug (Pete Rubinas) was early for a site outside of the mountains.

Marsh Wren: One along the Little Tennessee River Greenway in Franklin *Macon* NC 13-17 Nov (Timothy Carstens) was late for a site in the mountain region.

Lapland Longspur: Individuals at the southern end of Oregon Inlet *Dare* NC 13-14 Oct (Ann Stinely, m. obs.) and at North Point Pond on Ocracoke Island *Hyde* NC 15 Oct (Gerald Head) were somewhat early. Individuals on Seaforth Beach at Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 6 Nov (Ron Martin, Mark Montazer, m. obs.) and in the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake *Durham* NC 11 Nov (Noah Rokoske, et al.) were unusual for those areas.

Snow Bunting: One seen on the southern side of Oregon Inlet *Dare* NC 26 Oct into November (Vern Bothwell, Joe Donahue, m. obs.) was joined by additional Snow Buntings

towards the end of the period, with a notable count of 20 made there 30 Nov (Mark McShane). Four were seen on the beach near Cape Point Dare NC 18 Nov (Michael Gosselin, et al.). Individuals on Ocracoke Island *Hyde* NC 17 Nov (Ashlee Keiper-Kintz) and at Ft Macon SP *Carteret* NC 17 Nov (Marty Wall) were locally unusual.

Snow Bunting, 26 Oct 2023, Dare County, NC. Photograph by Gregory Hudson.

Grasshopper Sparrow: One at Biltmore Estate *Buncombe* NC 4 Nov (Jay Wherley) through 8 Nov (Alan Lenk) was somewhat late for the mountain region.

Lark Sparrow: This species was well-reported again this fall. Inland of the coastal plain, individuals were seen and photographed at seven sites, 9 Aug through 5 Sep. Along or near the coast, sightings were made at about a dozen sites, most mid-September through mid-October. Counts of two were made on the southern side of Oregon Inlet *Dare* NC 20-21 Aug (Mark DiGiovanni, m. obs.) and 3 Sep (Daniel Irons).

Clay-colored Sparrow: Individuals were reported at about a dozen sites along or near the coast 4 Sep through 18 Oct. Individuals seen and photographed at Oak Hollow Lake *Guilford* NC 20 Sep (Andrew Thornton), near Brevard *Transylvania* NC 8 Oct (Nathaniel Axtell) and in southeastern *Mecklenburg* NC 3-5 Nov (Chris Huffstickler, m. obs.) were notable inland.

Fox Sparrow: One seen and photographed on the southern side of Oregon Inlet *Dare* NC 16 Oct (Andrew Thornton) was early.

LeConte's Sparrow: One seen and photographed in the Voice of America Game Land *Beaufort* NC 11 Nov (Larry Chen, Sarah Toner) was the only one reported this fall.

Nelson's Sparrow: One seen and photographed by many at Lake Crabtree *Wake* NC 1-4 Nov (Scott Mullens, m. obs.) was a good find inland.

Saltmarsh Sparrow: One photographed at Ft Fisher *New Hanover* NC 20 Sep (Michelle Bélanger) was rather early.

Henslow's Sparrow: Individuals seen and photographed near Valle Crucis *Watauga* NC 14-15 Oct (Maxwell Ramey, m. obs.), near Brevard *Transylvania* NC 30 Oct (Nathaniel Axtell, et al.) and in Lexington *Lexington* SC 31 Oct (Alison Davies, et al.) were notable for those areas.

Savannah Sparrow: Three, an adult and two juveniles, along Hooper Ln *Henderson* NC 12 Aug (Kevin Burke) likely nested in that area.

Lincoln's Sparrow: Transients began trickling through the mountain region in late September and were well-reported inland in October through early November. Three at Biltmore Estate *Buncombe* NC 4 Nov (Jay Wherley) and four around Lake Junaluska *Haywood* NC 8 Nov (Jeff Gresko) were good counts for the mountain region in November.

Bobolink: One seen at Ft Moultrie *Charleston* SC 14 Nov (Pam Ford, Craig Watson) was late.

Western Meadowlark: Pending review by the NCBRC is the report with photographs of a Western Meadowlark in the parking lot at Clingman's Dome *Swain* NC 22 Oct (Coutney Thomas). If accepted, the report would provide the third record for NC and the first with photos.

Bullock's Oriole: One returning to a yard with feeders in Mt Pleasant *Charleston* SC 6 Oct (*fide* Craig Watson) was early.

Northern Waterthrush: One along the Saluda Riverwalk *Richland* SC 23 Nov (Peter Hamner) and 25 Nov (Michael Callan) was late.

Swainson's Warbler: One at Bethania *Forsyth* NC 7-9 Oct (Jeff Palis, m. obs.) was late.

Tennessee Warbler: Latest to depart were individuals at Duke Gardens *Durham* NC 14 Nov (Alex Nickley, et al.) and in *Anderson* SC 15 Nov (Steve Patterson).

Nashville Warbler: Individuals photographed at Northeast Creek Park *Onslow* NC 23 Nov (Trenton Voytko) and in North Charleston *Charleston* SC 28 Nov (Denise Norris) were late.

Connecticut Warbler: Four were reported this fall, individuals at Robertson Creek Nature Preserve *Granville* NC 18 Sep (Mike Manetz), at Hatteras Point *Dare* NC 28 Sep (Daniel Irons), along Howerton Rd *Guilford* NC 7 Oct (Joe Donahue), and at South Mountains SP *Burke* NC 9 Oct (Greg Hays, m. obs.).

MacGillivray's Warbler: Pending review by the SCBRC is the report with photographs of an apparent MacGillivray's Warbler mist-netted at the banding station on the western end of Kiawah Island *Charleston* SC 4 Oct (Wentao Yang, et al.). If accepted, the report would provide the second record for SC, the first made at the same site almost ten years prior, 18 Oct 2013.

Mourning Warbler: Individuals were seen at Beaver Lake *Buncombe* NC 21-27 Sep (Henry Gargan, Jay Wherley, m. obs.), at Warren Wilson College *Buncombe* NC 22 Sep (Wherley), at Price Park *Guilford* NC 24 Sep (Heather Buttonow), and in the Horsepen Creek arm of Lake Brandt *Guilford* NC 10 Oct (Buttonow).

American Redstart: An adult male, likely the same individual that lingered until 19 Nov at that site last year, in a yard in northeastern *Lexington* SC 22 Nov (Jerry Griggs) was quite late.

Cape May Warbler: 300 at Run Hill State Natural Area *Dare* NC 15 Oct (Andrew Thornton) was a remarkable concentration of migrants.

Bay-breasted Warbler: This species made a good showing during fall migration this year. Counts included 275 at Balsam Gap *Buncombe* NC 24 Sep (Bruce Young), 17 along Howerton Rd in *Guilford* NC 1 Oct (Andrew Thornton), 25 at Ebeneezer Point on Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 13 Oct (Lauren Marmor), and 13 at Ebeneezer Point 18 Oct (Ron Martin).

Blackpoll Warbler: 49 around the southern side of Oregon Inlet *Dare* NC 17 Oct (Andrew Thornton) was a notable concentration of migrants. 15 at Ebeneezer Point on Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 5 Nov (Ron Martin) was a remarkable count for November. One photographed in a yard in western *Forsyth* NC 24 Nov (Jesse Haaf) was the latest to depart.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: One at Run Hill State Natural Area *Dare* NC 12 Sep (Andrew Thornton) was rather early.

Prairie Warbler: One photographed at the NC Arboretum *Buncombe* NC 2 Nov (LouAnn O'Hora) was quite late for a site in the mountain region.

Townsend's Warbler: Individuals were seen and photographed at three sites along the Outer Banks in *Dare* NC in the latter half of September—at Run Hill State Natural Area 16 Sep (Daniel Irons), along the Duck Park Boardwalk 16-17 Sep (David True, Teri Zambon True, m. obs.), and near the Bodie Island Lighthouse 30 Sep (Michael Gosselin, m. obs.). All reports are pending review by the NCBRC.

Townsend's Warbler, 17 Sep 2023, Duck Boardwalk, Dare County, NC. Photograph by Jeff Lewis.

Black-throated Green Warbler: A first-winter female photographed at Alligator River NWR *Dare* NC 19 Nov (Teri Zambon True, David True) was late to depart.

Summer Tanager: Individuals photographed in yards in Charlotte *Mecklenburg* NC 15 Nov (Marguerite Tucker) and in Chapel Hill *Orange* NC 28 Nov (Kat Cox) were late.

Western Tanager: One at Lake Higgins *Guilford* NC 13 Sep (Heather Buttonow) was extremely early for this species in the Carolinas. One in Beaufort *Carteret* NC 6 Oct (Marty Wall) was somewhat early. One photographed in Pinehurst *Moore* NC 3 Nov (Walt Jenkins) was more on schedule.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: 400 moving through Balsam Gap *Buncombe* NC 24 Sep (Bruce Young) was a notable count. One seen along Mid-Pines Rd *Wake* NC 23 Nov (John Lynch) was quite late.

Dickcissel: Migrants were well-reported this fall, in all regions but mostly at sites along or near the coast, primarily late September through early November. Eight at Run Hill State Natural Area *Dare* NC 15 Oct (Andrew Thornton) was a notable count of migrants. One in Cullowhee *Jackson* NC 12 Nov (Timothy Carstens) was late for a site in the mountain region.

Dickcissel, 30 Nov 2023, North River Wetlands Preserve, Otway, Carteret County, NC. Photograph by Douglas Racine.

Additional Nineteenth-Century Records for Ivory-billed Woodpecker (*Campephilus principalis*) in South Carolina

Benjamin E. Leese
Ahlstrom-Munksjö Filtration
Quality Assurance Microbiology Laboratory
122 West Butler Street
Mount Holly Springs, PA 17065
ben.leese@gmail.com

Cely (2023) stated that there was only one specimen of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker (*Campephilus principalis*) from South Carolina. He cited Post and Gauthreaux (1989), who reported one specimen from the state held at the Charleston Museum (ChM). In fact, there are five extant specimens and one lost specimen of the species from South Carolina (Table 1). This count does not include the two specimens reported in Leese (2019), which are not referrable to the state level.

Four specimens reside at the American Museum of Natural History, New York City (AMNH). One of those, AMNH:Birds:Skin-755576 is the basis of a record in Tanner (1942). Tanner's note connecting the specimen to R. C. Murphy is a reference to Murphy's paper on the specimen (Murphy 1929), and not to Murphy as collector. According to the AMNH catalog, AMNH:Birds:Skin-81186 was originally in ChM and was described by John Bachman. The connection to Bachman is unclear, although he was in Cheraw, where the specimen was collected, at the end of the Civil War.

Two other specimens moved between the Charleston Museum and the Museum of Comparative Zoology (MCZ) at Harvard. Gabriel Manigault (1833-1899), the director of the Charleston Museum gave two Ivory-billed Woodpecker specimens to Louis Agassiz (1807-1873), the founder of MCZ, in 1862. The date and place of collection may refer to their reception by Agassiz and might not represent precise data for the specimens. Contrary to Wayne (1910), these specimens were not originally collected by Kollock (*in litt.*, William Post to Jerome Jackson, 9 January 1992, in MCZ archives).

Those specimens were both whole birds preserved in alcohol, labeled as MCZ:Orn:2180 and MCZ:Orn:2181. MCZ:Orn:2180 is no longer extant and was likely discarded. MCZ:Orn:2181was removed from alcohol and prepared as a skin, which was returned to the Charleston Museum (ChM 28.302) in 1928 (Murphy 1929). However, its trunk skeleton and tissues remain at MCZ as MCZ:Orn:333418.

Table 1. Known specimens of Ivory-billed Woodpecker (*Campephilus principalis*) from South Carolina.

ID number		Type	Extant?	Sex	Coll. Date	Place
AMNH:Birds:Skin-755576		skin	Y	M	1876-04-06	Cheraw
AMNH:Birds:Skin-81186		skin	Y	F		Cheraw
AMNH:Birds:Skin-43983		skin	Y	M		Charleston
AMNH:Birds:Skin-43984		skin	Y	F		Charleston
MCZ:Orn:2180		ethanol	N	M	1862	Charleston
MCZ:Orn:2181 (ethanol) became:	MCZ:Orn:333418	ethanol	Y	F	1862	Charleston
	ChM 28.302	skin	Y			

Acknowledgements
Jeremiah Trimble (MCZ) and Matthew Gibson (ChM) provided helpful details and confirmed the presence of specimens in their collections.

Literature Cited

Cely, J. E. 2023. A nineteenth-century record for Ivory-billed Woodpecker (*Campephilus principalis*) in South Carolina. Chat 87:1-2.

Leese, B. E. 2019. Specimens and eggs of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker (*Campephilus principalis*) purportedly from the Carolinas. Chat 83:108-109.

Murphy, R. C. 1929. A second topotype of *Campephilus principalis*. Auk 46:376

Post, W. and S. A. Gauthreaux, Jr. 1989. Status and Distribution of South Carolina Birds. Contributions from the Charleston Museum XVIII.

Tanner, J. T. 1942. The Ivory-Billed Woodpecker. Research Report No. 1, National Audubon Society, New York. Reprinted in 1966 and 2003 by Dover Publications, Mineola, NY.

Wayne, A. T. 1910. Birds of South Carolina. Contributions from the Charleston Museum I.

Fifty Years Ago in the Chat

Steve Shultz

The winter months of 1973-1974 were a time to participate in Christmas Bird Counts and then wait expectantly for the final tally and juicy rarity reports to be published in The Chat. Nowadays rarities are reported instantly through various social media channels, and compilers often provide e-mailed synopses within a short time after the count. But in 1974 CBC members eagerly anticipated the March issue of The Chat to read up on what was seen and where.

Participants who planned to motor to distant counts, or used a car to visit their favorite local patch, may have been challenged by the large number of gasoline stations closed as a result of the ongoing oil embargo. And road trips to visit popular winter birding sites may have taken a bit longer starting on January 2, 1974, when President Richard M. Nixon instituted a national 55 m.p.h. speed limit.

But gasoline was obtained, counters counted, and the results gathered and presented by Eloise F. Potter, the editor of The Chat. We learned that House Finch numbers reached a new high of 300 birds across 11 of the 29 count circles spanning both states. Raleigh birders could hope to find House Finches roosting in "a large fir tree in the Raleigh Rose Garden". Down in Moore County, North Carolina, a new housing development and soon-to-be-filled Lake Surf were included in the reconfigured count circle. This enabled Chris Marsh and John Fussell to find five Lapland Longspurs on a flat at the lake's future site. Fussell also flushed a Sora nearby. Along the coast, an immature White Ibis at Pea Island was noted as a first Christmas Count record for the area. White Ibis are now rather common throughout the winter at Pea Island. Perhaps the most unusual sighting on the Bodie-Pea Island count was an adult male Connecticut Warbler, a rarely seen bird anywhere in the Carolinas, but nearly unheard of in mid-winter.

Elsewhere in the March 1974 issue, we learn of an exciting record for Great Cormorant in North Carolina. Today this species is uncommon at favored sites, often jetties or inlets with channel markers. The issue's General Field Notes relates that the Old North State's third sight record of Great Cormorant was made on 6 April 1973 by Jack and Eloise F. Potter while driving across the Mann's Harbor bridge in Dare County. By virtue of this sighting, the species was placed on the official North Carolina list.

In 1974 the 600 Club may have meant different things to different people, as is the case today. For baseball fans, this denotes players with more than 600 home runs. In 1974 the list stood at three (Aaron, Mays and Ruth). Today there are nine. In the birding world, the 600 Club was that rarified group of individuals who had 600 or more species on their North American life lists, with North America considered the United States and Canada, excluding Hawaii. Louis C. Fink reports in the CBC Roundtable feature that about 100 birders were members of the club, with just one in the Carolinas, Edwin L. Stearns of South Carolina, who listed 634 species. Today the number of birders listed on eBird with sightings in just the United States number well over a thousand, with many birders in the Carolinas tallying greater than 600. Times have changed.

CAROLINA BIRD CLUB

www.carolinabirdclub.org

The Carolina Bird Club is a non-profit organization which represents and supports the birding community in the Carolinas through its official website, publications, meetings, workshops, trips, and partnerships, whose mission is

- To promote the observation, enjoyment, and study of birds.
- To provide opportunities for birders to become acquainted, and to share information and experience.
- To maintain well-documented records of birds in the Carolinas.
- To support the protection and conservation of birds and their habitats and foster an appreciation and respect of natural resources.
- To promote educational opportunities in bird and nature study.
- To support research on birds of the Carolinas and their habitats.

Membership is open to all persons interested in the conservation, natural history, and study of wildlife with particular emphasis on birds. Dues, contributions, and bequests to the Club may be deductible from state and federal income and estate taxes to the extent allowable. Pay dues or make donations at https://carolinabirdclub.org/dues. Make change of address at https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/members/profile. Send correspondence regarding membership matters to the Headquarters Secretary. Answers to questions about the club might be found at https://carolinabirdclub.org/about.html.

ANNUAL DUES

Individual or non-profit	$30.00
Family	$35.00
Student	$15.00
Sustaining and businesses	$30.00
Patron	$50.00 and up
Life Membership (payable in four consecutive $125 installments)	$500.00
Associate Life Membership (in same household as life member)	$100.00

ELECTED OFFICERS

President	Susan Campbell, Apex NC	susan@ncaves.com
NC Vice-Presidents	Christine Stoughton Root, Arapahoe NC	
	Katie Greenberg, Arden NC	
SC Vice-President	Julie Davis, Pawleys Island SC	
Secretary	Karaleah Reichart, Raleigh NC	
Treasurer	Jared Miles, Charlotte NC	
NC Members-at-Large	Betsy Kane, Washington NC	
	Paul Laurent, Banner Elk NC	
	Bob Lewis, Durham NC	
	Barbara “Kitty” Reynolds, Asheville NC	
SC Members-at-Large	Richard Hayes, Charleston SC	
	Jennifer Roberts, Columbia SC	

EX-OFFICIO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chat Editor	Steve Shultz, Apex, NC	chat@carolinabirdclub.org
Newsletter Editor	Steve Dowlan, Vilas, NC	newsletter@carolinabirdclub.org
Website Editor	Kent Fiala, Hillsborough, NC	webeditor@carolinabirdclub.org
Immediate Past President	Steve Tracy, Gastonia, NC	

HEADQUARTERS SECRETARY

Amanda Laurent 1800 Meadow Ave Banner Elk NC 28604 hq@carolinabirdclub.org

The Chat

Vol. 88 Spring 2024 No. 2

Carolina Bird Club
www.carolinabirdclub.org

The Quarterly Bulletin of the Carolina Bird Club, Inc.
The Ornithological Society of the Carolinas

THE CHAT

ISSN No. 0009-1987

Quarterly Bulletin of Carolina Bird Club, Inc.

1909 Lakepark Drive, Raleigh NC 27612

Vol. 88 **Spring 2024** **No. 2**

General Field Notes Editors
North Carolina **Christina Harvey**
South Carolina **William Post**

Briefs for the Files **Harry LeGrand**

Editor **Steve Shultz**
2404 Bristers Spring Way
Apex, NC 27523
chat@carolinabirdclub.org

THE CHAT is published quarterly by the Carolina Bird Club, Inc., 1800 Meadow Avenue, Banner Elk NC 28604. Subscription price $30 per year.

Copyright © 2024 by Carolina Bird Club, Inc. Except for purposes of review, material contained herein may not be reproduced without written permission from the Carolina Bird Club, Inc.

General Field Notes

An Inland Record of Red-footed Booby (*Sula sula*) in North Carolina
Steven Shultz 25

Briefs for the Files

Winter 2023-2024 *Harry LeGrand* 27

Birder's Media Review

Artists and Aves find New Voices in "The Birdsong Project" (And We Should Listen)
Jane Bailey 51

Cover: Yellow Warbler, 8 Jun 2023, Valle Crucis Community Park, Watauga County, NC. Photograph by John Long.

An Inland Record of Red-footed Booby (*Sula sula*) in North Carolina

Steven Shultz
2404 Bristers Spring Way, Apex NC 27523

A Red-footed Booby (*Sula sula*) was found by Robert Oberfelder around 10:30 a.m. Friday, March 3, 2023 at Yates Mill County Park just south of Raleigh (Wake County) NC.

Photos of the birds quickly circulated on local and state group chats, and within a short period of time scores of observers, some casual park visitors wondering what all the fuss was about, others traveling from nearby locations, and at least one arriving by bicycle, arrived to see the bird perched on an under-construction boardwalk spanning the relatively small mill pond. The bird remained in view, often with head tucked in and apparently sleeping, until it flew from the park at around 1:12 pm. The bird was not relocated.

Red-footed Booby, 3 Mar 2023,
Yates Mill Park,
Wake County, NC.
Photograph by Bob Lewis.

The weather on March 3 was typical for spring in central North Carolina, with a high of 74 degrees and a low of 59. Showers occurred on and off just prior to and during the sighting, with widespread thunderstorms moving through the area on March 2 (Timeanddate.com).

Red-footed Booby is a pan-tropical sulid that breeds as close to North Carolina as the Caribbean, where it is uncommon. Red-footed occur in two color phases, light (somewhat resembling Masked Booby) and dark (somewhat resembling young Brown Booby, but nonetheless distinctive). The Wake County bird was an adult dark-phase bird that showed the diagnostic red feet as well as a bluish bill, pink bare facial skin, brown upperparts, gray/white throat, and mottled white and brown underparts.

Red-footed Booby is an extremely rare species for North Carolina, and rare for the United States in general. There is one prior accepted record for the state, that of a bird photographed from a cruise ship transiting North Carolina waters on 8 June 2019 by Tom McElfrish. While the ship was nearly 200 miles offshore, the record was assigned to Carteret County based on nearest point of land (Swick 2021).

Red-footed Booby, 3 Mar 2023,
Yates Mill Park,
Wake County, NC.
Photograph by Bob Lewis.

Red-footed Booby, 3 Mar 2023,
Yates Mill Park,
Wake County, NC.
Photograph by Kent Fiala.

This is the first inland report for the state, appears to be one of only a handful of prior inland reports for the United States, and may be the farthest inland report recorded in North America (eBird). A bird found perched atop an outdoor shower in Vernon Parish, Louisiana 12 August 2020 was about 78 miles from the Gulf of Mexico (eBird). An "inland" report from Lake Woodruff NWR in Florida on 22 July 2020 was about 25 miles from the Atlantic Ocean (eBird). The Wake County bird was about 110 miles from the Atlantic Ocean. A Central American record, a bird at Lago Petén Itzá in Guatemala on 23 June 2019, was a similar distance from the Caribbean Sea as the Wake County bird was to the Atlantic Ocean (eBird). Distances noted are best estimates using Google Maps measuring tools and represent distance from the sighting to the nearest point of oceanic water.

Readers may be interested to review *The Genus Sula in the Carolinas: An Overview of the Phenology and Distribution of Gannets and Boobies in the South Atlantic Bight* by David S. Lee and Christopher Haney in the Spring 1984 issue of The Chat. While somewhat dated, the article provides an in-depth review of Sulids in the Carolinas.

Literature Cited

eBird. 2023. eBird: An online database of bird distribution and abundance [web application]. eBird, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, New York. Available: http://www.ebird.org. (Accessed: 11 August 2023).

Swick, Nate, et. al. 2021. 2020 Annual Report of the North Carolina Bird Records Committee. Chat 85:139-148

Timeanddate.com. https://www.timeanddate.com/weather/usa/raleigh/historic. (Accessed 11 August 2023).

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

Harry LeGrand
1109 Nichols Drive
Raleigh, NC 27605
hlegrandjr@gmail.com

(All dates 1 December 2023 – 29 February 2024, unless otherwise noted)

Briefs for the Files is a seasonal collection of uncommon-to-rare or unusual North and South Carolina bird sightings and events that do not necessarily require a more detailed General Field Note or article in The Chat. The majority of these sightings are taken from eBird reports and that website. Other reports are taken from the Carolinabirds listserv, with some from various Facebook group sites, iNaturalist and several other websites, and from direct correspondence with the Briefs for the Files editor.

Winter	*December 1–February 28*	*due March 20*
Spring	*March 1–May 31*	*due June 20*
Summer	*June 1–July 31*	*due August 20*
Fall	*August 1–November 30*	*due December 20*

Nearly all of the eBird reports have been accepted/vetted by regional reviewers in the Carolinas. Other reports included here have been considered valid by the Briefs editor, as long as a written description and/or photographs accompanied the reports. However, a few of the records included in these Briefs should be further reviewed by state bird records committees for ultimate acceptance.

Reports of very rare birds might warrant a General Field Note in this journal. You can submit your Field Note directly to the Chat editor without going through me.

Abbreviations: **BRC** = Bird Records Committee; **et al.** = and others; **m. obs.** = multiple observers; **NC** = North Carolina; **NP** = National Park; **NWR** = National Wildlife Refuge; **SC** = South Carolina; **SP** = State Park; **WMA** = Wildlife Management Area.

All place names in italics are counties.

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck: Unusually far north was one photographed by Karen and Tom Beatty at Bells Island Road *Currituck* NC on 12 Feb. In fact, this was the only winter report for that state. The species does overwinter regularly along much of the SC coast, and there were reports there north to Pawley Island.

Snow Goose: This species was reported from several dozen sites across both Carolinas, including at a number of mountain sites, where it is normally rare.

Ross's Goose: Rare in the mountains were singles at Lake Junaluska *Haywood* NC on 2 Dec (Alan Lenk et al.), at Ecusta Pond *Transylvania* NC from 12-16 Jan (Nathaniel Axtell, Michael Plauche et al.), Mills River area *Henderson* on 2-3 Jan (Tommy Llama et al.), Beaver Lake Bird Sanctuary *Buncombe* on 16 Jan (Jay Wherley et al.), and Warren Wilson College in Swannanoa *Buncombe* from 1-18 Dec (Till Dohse et al.); two were at the last site on 1 Dec. Piedmont records of singletons came from W. Kerr Scott Reservoir *Wilkes* on 29 Dec (Dale Reynolds), *Gaston* on 27 Jan (Edward Walter), *Guilford* on 24 Feb (Emily Read), two at East Bend *Yadkin* on 9 Dec (David and Susan Disher), and up to three south of Raleigh *Wake* from 11 Jan – 11 Feb (m. ob.).

Greater White-fronted Goose: Inland reports in NC this winter were from *Transylvania, Yadkin, Forsyth*, and *Durham* (two birds) counties. Inland reports from SC were from *Greenville, Anderson* (seven birds), and *Clarendon*. Oddly, the only coastal Carolina reports were of singles in *Onslow* and *New Hanover*.

Cackling Goose: Very rare in the mountains was one photographed by Mark Thomas at Swiss Pine Lake *Mitchell* on 4 Feb. Others well inland this winter were singletons in *Rockingham* and *Orange* counties. As usual, small numbers were seen at a few regular sites in *Washington* and *Dare* counties, with a peak count of six in the first county. The only SC reports were from Santee NWR *Clarendon*, with five remaining for much of Feb.

Trumpeter Swan: A very rare inland report was one that remained at the lake in Hanging Rock SP *Stokes* NC from 22 Jan (Tony-Cara Woods) to the end of Feb (m. obs.). Presumably it is part of a re-introduction project in the Eastern States, rather than a stray from its main range in the northwestern part of the continent.

Trumpeter Swan, 27 Jan 24, Stokes County, NC. Photograph by Ian McDonald.

Blue-winged Teal: A count of eight at Lake Crabtree *Wake* NC on 27 Jan (Kevin Markham) was notable for midwinter in the Piedmont, where it is typically just a migrant.

Northern Shoveler: An estimate of 5,000 birds was a very high count, as made by Brian O'Shea at Mattamuskeet NWR *Hyde* NC on 18 Feb.

Eurasian Wigeon: As usual, a few were reported from coastal NC refuges; but quite rare farther south were singles seen near Wilmington *New Hanover* NC from 26 Dec – 21 Jan (Sam Cooper, Jamie Adams et al.), in *Berkeley* SC on 27 Jan (Brad Sale), and at Savannah NWR *Jasper* SC from 17 Jan – 13 Feb (John Becker et al.).

Mottled Duck: This species went unreported this winter in NC; but of the numerous SC records, where regular near the coast, two well inland at Santee NWR on 29 Jan (Andy Jones) and 18 Feb (Bob Ellis, Brad Sale) were noteworthy.

Canvasback: Quite rare for the NC mountains were up to two at Lake Junaluska *Haywood* from 17 Jan – 22 Feb (Vince Kloster et al.), two at Lake Julian *Buncombe* on 10 Feb (Alan Lenk) and one there on 23 Feb (m.obs.), and one at nearby Osceola Lake *Henderson* on 22 Jan (Tim Novak et al.). There were numerous other inland records in the Carolinas for this clearly declining species.

Redhead: Unlike the Canvasback, this species is clearly increasing across the Carolinas and is being seen often at inland lakes. As usual, huge numbers (10,000 or more) were tallied at the Pea Island NWR impoundments during the winter.

Greater Scaup: Scarce well inland, notable in the NC mountains this winter were birds (up to four) at Ecusta Pond *Transylvania*, Lake Junaluska, Lake Julian, Warren Wilson College area *Buncombe*, and the Mills River area *Henderson.* There were many more reports from Piedmont lakes than usual this winter, including the usual several dozen at Brier Creek Reservoir *Wake* NC.

Common Eider: One at Folly Beach *Charleston* SC on 22 Jan (David McLean) was the farthest south individual this winter. As usual, there were many coastal NC reports, including two that spent much of the winter at Jennette's Pier in *Dare*. The peak was eight at the Duck Research Pier *Dare* from 28 Dec – 3 Jan (Jeremy Braun).

Harlequin Duck: Perhaps the same four individuals moved between the Duck and Jennette's piers *Dare* from 31 Dec - 26 Feb, a remarkable length of stay for this tight "family group" (Jeremy Braun et al.) Apparently the only other seasonal report was one at the Wrightsville Beach *New Hanover* NC jetty from 29 Jan – 9 Feb (Greg Massey et al.).

Surf Scoter: A notable winter tally of three was made at Lake Hickory *Alexander* NC on 10 Dec (Dwayne Martin et al.). Single birds were seen far inland in *Guilford* and *Chatham*. The species is more "numerous" inland in late fall and early spring but is always a good find anywhere in fresh water.

White-winged Scoter: Always a good find inland in winter, singles were seen at Lookout Shoals Lake *Catawba* NC on 2 Jan (Matt Wangerin) and at Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC on 5 Dec (Wesley Riffle). There were more winter records than usual along the SC coast; however, owing to a rather mild winter there was not a major southward push along the coast that is sometimes seen in very cold winters.

Black Scoter: Though not unusual in late fall and early spring inland, as with the other scoter species, few of them are seen in the Dec-Feb period. The only record in fresh water this season was one to two seen at Jordan Lake *Chatham* from 4-9 Dec (Don Pelly et al.).

Long-tailed Duck: This was a rather poor season for this species, which seems to be declining as a wintering bird in our coastal waters. Far inland birds, in NC, were reported at Lake James *Burke* on 8 Dec (Matthew Murphy) (two birds); *Polk* on 4 Feb (Carole Stroupe); and *Guilford* on 11 Dec (Andrew Thornton) (two) and 5-11 Feb (Thornton et al.) (two). Very rare in SC was one well inland at Moncks Corner *Berkeley* on 19 Feb (Andy and Marge Harrison).

Common Goldeneye: Reports across the Carolinas were clearly down this winter, both coastally and inland, with no major hard freezes that are needed to force numbers southward to our region. In fact, as with the Long-tailed Duck, the species is retreating as a wintering bird along the coast, and the small flocks that used to winter on several bays and estuaries in NC have essentially disappeared, perhaps an effect of climate change.

Common Merganser: It has become obvious now that the many dozens of montane NC records this winter, often with low double-digit counts, are simply birds that bred there during the summer, plus their offspring, as so few additional records came from the Piedmont and Coastal Plain in this warmer-than-usual winter. Despite this warming trend at all seasons, it is surprising yet gratifying that this Northern species is increasing as a nesting bird along NC rivers and large creeks in the mountains.

Red-breasted Merganser: Unlike with the Common Merganser, this species was reported on inland lakes many dozens of times this winter, much more than usual. It was formerly just a migrant inland, with few seen in the winter months, but numbers up to 20 or more were noted on several occasions.

Ruffed Grouse: One reported by Robert Smitley at Cherokee Lake Day Use Area *Cherokee* NC on 31 Dec was a seemingly rare report for this lower elevation mountain county.

American Flamingo: Though none of the flock of up to 17 birds that spent much of the fall in Pamlico Sound at Pea Island *Dare* NC remained into Dec, one did stay in South Carolina waters for most of the winter, for a first state winter record. One remained at Cape Romain NWR *Charleston* from 1 Dec – 3 Feb, as noted by David McLean, Michael Richmond, et al.

Horned Grebe: A count of 320 at Jordan Lake on 24 Dec by Spike Millington might be an all-time Piedmont NC record count.

Red-necked Grebe: Reports this winter both coastally and inland were surprisingly few, probably owing to a relatively mild winter. Single birds were photographed on Lake Norman *Mecklenburg* NC on 9 Dec (Jeff Lemons et al.), at Huntington Beach SP *Georgetown* SC on 11 Jan (Caleb Strand, Alina Martin), and at Duck *Dare* NC on 19 Jan (Jeremy Braun).

Eared Grebe: Another grebe in disappointingly low numbers was this species, as in a normal winter there are often five or more Carolina reports, including a few along the

coast. The only reports were in inland NC at Jordan Lake *Chatham* 1-6 Dec (Sandy Cash et al.), the same or a different bird there from 19-25 Feb (Mark Montazer et al.), and a sighting at Hyco Lake *Person* on 3 Dec (Jeff Blalock).

Eurasian Collared-Dove: This non-native species is slowly moving northward into the western NC Piedmont, but still remains very local. There were a handful of reports from *Yadkin* NC, but the species is still lacking, for better or worse, eastward through the central and northern Piedmont and Coastal Plain of that state. A report of two at Pocosin Lakes NWR *Washington* NC on 22 Dec (Robert Lethco) seems to be a first report for the western "Pamlimarle Peninsula". It was reported over essentially all of SC this season, and at a few NC mountain and southwestern Piedmont sites from *Buncombe* southward and southeastward.

Common Ground Dove: Though there were many reports from the southern half of South Carolina, as usual, there were no Carolina reports northeast of *Orangeburg* and *Dorchester* counties (both inland). Thus, there were no coastal reports this winter northeast of *Beaufort* SC, signaling a further decline in this essentially non-migratory species that formerly nested into southern coastal NC.

White-winged Dove: There were a few seasonal records, with all being of singletons along the coast: *Carteret* NC on 21-22 Dec (Martin Wall), Carolina Beach *New Hanover* NC from 1-4 Jan (Ken Ashe, Ryan Justice), Wrightsville Beach *New Hanover* NC on 28 Jan (Ashe), North Myrtle Beach *Horry* SC on 21 Dec (Deb Winter), and Sullivan's Island *Charleston* SC from 1-20 Dec (Elizabeth Anderegg). At the last site, three were noted by Anderegg on 1 and 5 Dec.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: This species winters routinely now at or near feeders along the entire Carolina coast. However, few occur in the Piedmont or upper Coastal Plain in winter. The only such accepted eBird report this winter with documentation was one at a feeder in *Greenville* SC on 18 Feb (Phyllis Gilreath). One reported in central SC had no details. The farthest inland NC birds were in *Washington, Beaufort*, and *Craven* counties.

Black-chinned Hummingbird: There were a few reports of female or immature birds identified as this species this winter, though none were accepted by eBird reviewers. Nonetheless, it is assumed that there were a few at feeders in the Carolinas this winter, but none were adult males or immature males showing purple gorget feathers that would provide conclusive documentation.

Rufous Hummingbird: Unlike the Ruby-throated, this hummingbird species occurs mainly inland, often in the mountains and foothills. This season, individuals were photographed in *Madison* NC on 31 Dec (Alan Lenk), Burnsville *Yancey* NC from 6-26 Jan (Debi Wyatt), a long-recurring female in *Catawba* NC from the fall season to early spring (Dwayne Martin et al.), at Chapel Hill *Orange* NC the entire winter (Marty McClelland), a male in *Chatham* NC the entire winter (fide Susan Campbell), at Wilmington *New Hanover* from 7 Jan – 4 Feb (Sam Cooper), in Simpsonville *Greenville* SC on 9 Feb (James White), and in *Charleston* SC from 7 Jan – 13 Feb (Stacy Turner).

King Rail: Very rarely found well inland in winter, one was heard at Lake Surf *Moore* NC on 16-17 Dec by John Bird and others. Somewhat more expected was one heard at Santee NWR *Clarendon* SC on 23 Dec (Dennis Forsythe, Lisa Hayes) and another at Taw Caw Creek Park in that county on 16 Feb (Caroline Eastman). One was seen at a marsh near Clarkton *Bladen* NC on 18 Jan by Amy Padgett, another nice record well away from coastal areas where it regularly winters in fresh or slightly brackish marshes.

Virginia Rail: This species probably winters routinely well inland in the Carolinas but is seldom heard. Of the fairly numerous far inland records this season, the most notable was one to two heard at The Park at Flat Rock *Henderson* NC from 6-21 Feb (Tim Novak et al.), very noteworthy for the mountain region.

Sora: Much rarer inland in winter than the Virginia Rail, singletons were heard at Concord Mills Wetland *Cabarrus* NC on 2 Dec (Taylor Piephoff) and 4 Jan (Greg Hays), at a retention pond in *York* SC on 30 Dec (Dennis Kent et al.), and at Camden Riverfront Environmental Park *Kershaw* SC on 7 Dec (Graham Norman – two birds). A Virginia Rail was heard with the Sora at the first site on 2 Dec, a very rare occurrence of two rail species found at an inland site on the same day in winter!

Common Gallinule: As with the rails above, this species is quite rare inland in winter. Of note this season were singles at Bethel *Pitt* NC on 4-5 Jan (Joe Weiss, Stacy Weiss), up to four at Lake Wallace *Marlboro* SC from 2 Dec – 3 Feb (Mike Turner), and five at Boykin Mill Pond *Kershaw* SC on 10 Feb (Graham Norman).

Purple Gallinule: Though this species is a common breeder at Savannah NWR *Jasper* SC, up to two seen there from 4 Dec – 2 Jan (Kevin Brady et al.) was a rarity for the winter season.

Limpkin: There were a remarkable number of winter records across the Carolinas, for a species that was practically accidental at any season barely a decade ago! In the NC mountains, one present at Lake Junaluska from 1-29 Dec (Bob Dellinger et al.) provided a first winter record for the province. Perhaps this was the same individual as seen there in early Oct? In that state's Piedmont was one at Lake Hickory *Catawba* on 22 Dec (Dwayne Martin et al.), another at Jordan Lake on 15 Dec (Spike Millington), and perhaps the same bird was seen at Bynum *Chatham* on 24 Dec (Susie Crate). In that state's Coastal Plain was one staying at Buckhorn Reservoir *Wilson* from 7-11 Dec (Ann Brice et al.). In SC, one was seen at Prosperity *Saluda* on 27 Jan (Lori West), three were at Pinewood *Sumter* on 22 Jan (Carl Bussells), one was at Elloree *Calhoun* on 2 Feb (Cathy Mathias), two to five were at Bradley Branch *Horry* from 2-9 Dec (Mark Johnson), and two were at Myrtle Beach *Horry* on 20 Feb (Brian and Heidi Murphy). A few were also seen farther down the coast in *Berkeley* and *Jasper* counties.

Sandhill Crane: Reports of this migrant species were much more numerous in the Carolinas than usual. An excellent Piedmont count was 13, photographed in *Durham* NC on 28 Feb (Patrick Coin). Other well-inland NC records came from *Transylvania, Henderson, Anson, Orange, Wake, Moore*, and *Johnston*; some of these were of flocks flying overhead. In northern *Edgecombe*, where some have spent the winter roosting in a

swamp for a few years (Brian Bockhahn et al.), many double-digit counts were made, and Ricky Davis tallied 71 birds departing the swamp on 7 Jan. As usual, there was a wintering flock at Pungo refuge *Washington* with a peak of at least 22 birds (m. obs.), as well as two again returning to Beaufort *Carteret* to spend the winter there (Martin Wall et al.). Inland SC records came from *Oconee, Richland, Orangeburg*, and the usual sizable wintering flock at Santee NWR. At the last site, an excellent tally of 121 was made by Shawn Smolen-Morton on 3 Feb.

Black-necked Stilt: Seldom found in winter (or even in late fall) in the region, unusual was one at Pea Island NWR NC from 27 Jan - 3 Feb (Ray Doyle et al.) and two birds at Mattamuskeet NWR *Hyde* NC on 8 Dec (Allen Bryan et al.). In SC, eight were notable at the Yawkey Wildlife Center *Georgetown* on 14 Dec (Ken and Julie Davis, Cherrie Sneed), and up to eight were also at the Nemours Wildlife Foundation site *Beaufort* from 12 Jan – 28 Feb (Steven Guy et al.).

Pacific Golden-Plover: Remarkable and a very rare winter record for North America was one photographed by Pat Draisey, Jeff Lewis, et al. on 11-14 Jan at Alligator River NWR *Dare*. The record has yet to be reviewed by the NC BRC; if accepted, it would be the first NC record other than the repeating fall migrant bird seen in the Cape Hatteras *Dare* region.

Pacific Golden-Plover, 12 Jan 24, Dare County, NC. Photograph by Jeff Lewis.

Killdeer: Andrew Thornton estimated about 650 at a site in *Beaufort* NC on 4 Dec, which might be a record state count.

Wilson's Plover: Not normally wintering in NC, this species seems semi-regular at the eastern end of Shackleford Banks *Carteret* at this season. This winter, two were there on 30 Dec (Mitchell Dart, Avery Dart), with one on 7 Jan (Jamie Adams). Nearby, Andrew Thornton tallied four at Rachel Carson Reserve on 2 Jan; the species might at times overwinter there as well. As expected, there were numerous winter records along the SC coast, as far north as Huntington Beach SP.

Whimbrel: An excellent midwinter count for NC was six noted at the eastern end of Shackleford Banks on 30 Dec (Mitchell Dart, Avery Dart); five were at Cape Hatteras Point *Dare* on 1 Dec (Christopher Hinkle, Benjamin Filreis).

Long-billed Curlew: As usual, the only winter reports of this scarce shorebird were at the eastern end of Shackleford Banks, one bird from 4 Dec – 7 Jan (Michelle Forte et al.),

and at Edisto Beach SP *Colleton* SC from 28 Jan – 3 Feb (Craig Watson, Pamela Ford), with a remarkable seven there on 28 Jan (Ken Tingman).

Bar-tailed Godwit: The usual wintering bird returned for the eighth (!) straight year to the eastern end of Shackleford Banks, where it was seen from Oct to at least 4-5 Dec (Michelle Forte, Ron Martin et al.). As there were no later reports, despite a number of visits, it might have departed to another site, if not passed away.

Red Knot: After a handful of winters with low numbers of this formerly numerous-in-winter coastal species, an upturn was noted this winter. For example, 10 were seen at Nags Head *Dare* on 20 Jan (Carolina Bird Club field trip); and excellent counts at various sites on Ocracoke Island *Hyde* were 44 on 10 Feb (Tucker Scully), 65 there on 11 Feb (Marcia Lyons), and an outstanding 225 on 30 Dec (Jeremy Wrenn). Coastal reports in SC were very widespread, as well.

Stilt Sandpiper: Not overly unusual into early winter at the Savannah Spoil Site *Jasper* SC, nine was a good count on 21 Dec (Steve Calver), with one there on 30 Dec (Calver et al.).

Dunlin: Normally departing inland sites by the end of Nov or early Dec, one at a wastewater pond in *Harnett* NC on 4 Jan (Erik Thomas) was notable. Even more notable for numbers were up to eight that remained at a farm pond near Townville *Anderson* SC from 13 Dec – 20 Jan (Steve Patterson et al.). A nearby site at Eighteenmile Creek *Anderson* also had up to eight birds from 28 Dec – 3 Jan (Kevin Kubach et al.).

Purple Sandpiper: A tally of 79, counted from a still video shot at the Wrightsville Beach jetty by Karen Hogan on 14 Jan, might be an all-time record count for NC.

Least Sandpiper: A few more individuals were found well inland this winter, and some do make it through the season. The farthest west were reported in *Forsyth* and *Mecklenburg* in NC and *Oconee* in SC.

Western Sandpiper: Very rarely reported well inland in winter, one was seen by Craig Watson, Pamela Ford, and others at the *Orangeburg* Sod Farms SC on 7 Feb.

Spotted Sandpiper: Although scattered birds lingered well inland into Dec, as is often the case, a few were present all winter at the Saluda Riverwalk *Richland* SC (Graham Norman et al.). There were as many as six there on 22 Feb (Christian Feldt).

Lesser Yellowlegs: Quite early in "spring" was one seen at Mountain Range – Driving Range *Transylvania* NC on 27 Feb (Michael Plauche, Nathaniel Axtell). Four to five may have overwintered as far inland as the Goldsboro Wastewater Treatment Plant *Wayne* NC, as birds were there from 11 Jan – 2 Feb (Lester Coble et al.).

Wilson's Phalarope: Remarkable in the winter season, as the species is seldom seen in the Carolinas past early Oct, one was found at Mackay Island NWR *Currituck* NC on 9

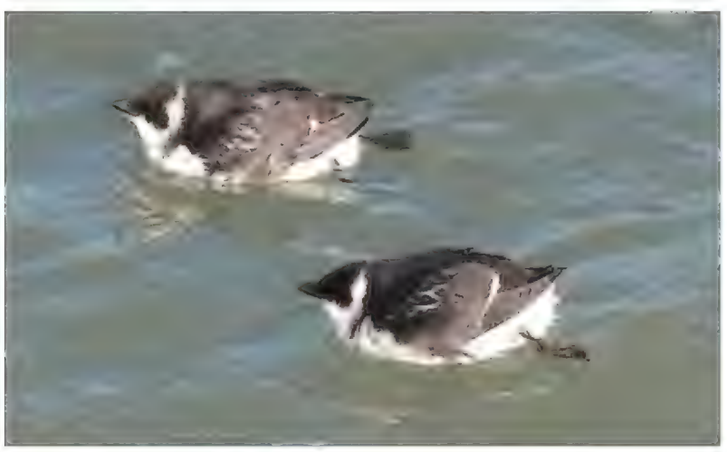
Dec (Terri Cuthriell, Tracy Tate et al.), and it or a different bird was photographed at Alligator River NWR on 11 Dec (David True).

Red Phalarope: This species winters regularly well off the coast but is seldom seen along the coast, much less inland. Remarkable in the middle of winter was one photographed at Jordan Lake *Chatham* from 15-19 Jan (Mark Montazer et al.). Another was photographed at an impoundment at Pea Island NWR on 21 Dec (Patrick Morgan), and another was at Cape Hatteras Point on 25 Jan (Andrew Thornton). A count of 226 was made on the 26 Feb pelagic trip off Oregon Inlet NC (Brian Patteson et al.).

Great Skua: None were reported off NC this winter, despite Brian Patteson successfully having five pelagic trips well off Oregon Inlet in Feb; the species is typically seen on at least half of such trips in winter.

Parasitic Jaeger: There were a few dozen coastal reports this winter, probably more than normal owing to the milder temperatures. Both this species and the Pomarine Jaeger winter in small numbers off the coast, though the latter is normally farther offshore and is much less often seen from beaches and piers than is the Parasitic.

Dovekie: One of the best flights ever recorded in the Carolinas took place this winter, though the highest numbers were concentrated mainly during a brief period of strong E and SE winds from 5-10 Jan. Sadly, a number were found dead along and just inland from the coast. By far the highest count was 1,079 from Johnnie Mercer's Pier at Wrightsville Beach on 6 Jan (Jamie Adams, Sam Cooper). The species was seen on most days this season from shore somewhere in NC, and over 200 were tallied on pelagic trips this season off Oregon Inlet on 15 and 24 Feb (Brian Patteson et al.), with a peak of 390 there on 18 Feb. Notably "inland" was a weak bird photographed on a road at Merritt *Pamlico* NC on 9 Jan (Christine Stoughton Root). Not surprisingly, the flight spilled over into coastal SC, as far south as Eastwood *Charleston* on 10 Jan (Marge Harrison). The best counts in that state were an excellent 36 at Murrells Inlet *Horry* on 6 Jan, and eight on that day at the nearby Garden City pier (both by Sage Church, Ocean Church).



Dovekies, 7 Jan 24, New Hanover County, NC. Photograph by Bob Lewis.

Common Murre: This species is increasing in NC waters over the last decade, and Brian Patteson did find the species on all five Feb trips off Oregon Inlet. Tallies were 15 on 10 Feb, 14 on 15 Feb, six on 18 Feb, an excellent 32 on 24 Feb, and 12 on 26 Feb. Andrew Thornton had a rare onshore sighting of one from Jennette's Pier at Nags Head on 18 Feb.

Thick-billed Murre: Though there is often a sighting or two along the NC coast each winter, one photographed on the Cape Fear River and adjacent to the boat dock at Carolina Beach SP *New Hanover* NC on 4 Feb (Steve Shultz, Susan Campbell et al.) was a complete shock at such close range on "fresh" water! Needless to say, the bird was weak or sick but was feeding frequently. Two were photographed off Oregon Inlet on 10 Feb (Brian Patteson et al.), and one was seen in that area on 18 Feb; both of these trips yielded five species of alcids!

Thick-billed Murre, 4 Feb 24, New Hanover County, NC. Photograph by Sam Cooper.

Razorbill: The most numerous alcid in most winters, numbers this winter were about normal to below normal and were certainly overshadowed by the huge Dovekie flight in early Jan. There were a handful of counts well over 100 birds, with 911 off Oregon Inlet on 24 Feb being the highest count on Brian Patteson's five pelagic trips that month. The species was poorly reported from coastal SC, south only to Huntington Beach SP.

Atlantic Puffin: As with the Common Murre, this species has been wintering more frequently in NC waters and is usually seen on pelagic trips off Oregon Inlet. It was encountered on all five trips led by Brian Patteson in Feb, with a peak count of 146 birds on 18 Feb.

Black-legged Kittiwake: There has been a disturbing decline in wintering birds off the NC coast in the last decade, and none were reported on any of the five above Feb pelagic trips. In fact, the only Carolina winter reports were of one on 1 Dec at Rodanthe *Dare* NC (Michael Gosselin), and one far off the *Dare* coast on 26 Jan (Ed and Ellen Gaillard).

Black-headed Gull: This European species was found on many more occasions than usual this winter, including a few times well inland: singles were photographed in NC at Jordan Lake *Chatham* on 11 Feb (Mark Montazer), seen at Falls Lake *Durham* on 7 Jan (Harry LeGrand), and photographed at a wastewater treatment facility in *Lexington* SC from 25 Jan – 29 Feb (Steve Patterson et al.). In addition to a good handful along the immediate coast, notable slightly inland were singles photographed at Alligator River NWR from 14-19 Jan (Jim Gant, Carolina Bird Club members et al.) and Union Point Park *Craven* NC from 17-28 Jan (Ronnie Hewlette et al.)

Little Gull: The first record for the western half of NC was of two photographed at Lake Norman *Mecklenburg* on 18 Dec, with one lingering to the next day (Jeff Lemons et al.); these birds were seen from a boat, as this is such a large lake! As usual, a very few were seen from the *Dare* coast and off Oregon Inlet on Feb pelagic trips, with a peak of three birds offshore on 26 Feb (Brian Patteson et al.).

Laughing Gull: Notable far inland in winter were five at Lake Robinson *Greenville* SC on 5 Dec (Laura Harris). There were a few scattered winter reports from near the Fall Line and many from the eastern half of the NC Coastal Plain, likely owing to a milder winter than usual.

Franklin's Gull: After a flurry of reports in late fall from Jordan Lake, one was still there on 9 Dec (Spike Millington) and 14 Dec (Robert Lethco). Exceptional for midwinter was one photographed at a pier in *Horry* SC on 7 Jan (Elizabeth Anderegg, Craig Watson et al.)

California Gull: The only report listed in eBird this season was an adult seen by Daniel Irons at Cape Hatteras Point *Dare* on 14 Feb. The species was nearly annually observed in large gull flocks there 10-20 years ago, and probably still does occur in most winters. Most were seen from within ORVs and thus observers were able to get close to the birds; however, owing to a permit fee for driving on the beach in recent years, few birders visit the point in vehicles now and thus there is less close-up scrutiny of the gulls there.

Iceland Gull: There were many fewer reports of this boreal species than usual in NC, with only a few from the immediate coast. Most notable for SC was an immature photographed by Scott Olmstead at Pawleys Island *Georgetown* on 26 Dec; this a Review Species in that state.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: This European species keeps exploding in numbers across the Carolinas, both coastally and well inland. However, other than a report from Lake Norman and from Lake Townsend *Guilford*, all inland reports were from Jordan Lake eastward; and none were far inland in SC. The peak Piedmont count was 40 at Harris Lake *Wake* on 29 Feb (Mark Hammond). At some sites along the NC coast, it is the most numerous gull species now in winter!

Glaucous Gull: As with the similar Iceland Gull, there were just a few reports this winter, of singletons along the *Dare* coast.

Forster's Tern: This species does not overwinter in the Piedmont, so one seen at Lake Crabtree *Wake* on 19 Feb (Kevin Markham), one seen at the Parksville boat ramp *McCormick* SC on 11 Jan (Carol Eldridge), and one noted at the River Bend boat landing *Saluda* SC on 19 Dec (Irvin Pitts) were notable visitors.

Sandwich Tern: As usual, a few lingered along the NC coast into the first week of Dec, but there were no reports there later in the winter, despite the milder weather than usual. The species does not winter along the Carolinas coast, though it seems surprising that none were seen along the Carolinas coast after 10 Dec.

Red-throated Loon: Though not overly rare as an inland migrant on large lakes, few are seen into the winter. Up to three lingered at Jordan Lake at least to 20 Dec (Mark Montazer et al.). One seen on Albemarle Sound at Palmetto-Peartree Preserve *Tyrrell* NC on 22 Feb (Andrew Thornton) seems to be a very rare report from that under-birded body of water.

Pacific Loon: For whatever reason, eBird reviewers under-accept reports of this species from the *New Hanover* NC area, where a handful regularly spend the winter. There indeed were numerous reports from the Wrightsville Beach area, based on individual reports, though only one report was officially accepted.

Northern Fulmar: This species continues to decline in NC waters, perhaps owing to global warming, though alcid numbers seemingly are increasing off that state's coast. There were no reputable fulmar reports this season, and it was missed on all of Brian Patteson's trips. Sightings of this species are often more frequent in Mar or Apr than in Feb, but few trips go offshore then.

Black-capped Petrel: This species spends the winter in Gulf Stream waters, though few boats visit these waters at that season owing to fog and the desire to look for cold water species closer inshore. Four were seen on Brian Patteson's 26 Feb pelagic trip off Oregon Inlet, and most important were three seen between 10-50 miles out from Bogue and Shackleford Banks *Carteret* NC on 24 Dec (Caleb Bronsink).

Manx Shearwater: A few were seen on Brian Patteson's pelagic trips off Oregon Inlet on 15 and 24 Feb, as well as from Cape Hatteras Point (Daniel Irons) and Oregon Inlet (Andrew Thornton), in Feb.

Wood Stork: This increasing species is now a regular winter resident along the entire SC coast. A few were seen in nearby NC in *Brunswick*, and the species might now be overwintering there, at least in the Twin Lakes portion of Sunset Beach (David Wilson et al.). One to several were seen there in all three winter months.

Anhinga: The mild winter allowed many more individuals to remain or occur in the region than usual at this season. Normally overwintering in NC primarily in the southeastern counties, a few stayed all winter in the Greenville *Pitt* area, and perhaps also at Mattamuskeet NWR; the farthest inland in that state were one in *Cleveland* on 3 Feb (Carole Stroupe) and another at Monroe *Union* on 4 Jan (Dennis Kent). The species was routinely seen in SC over nearly all of the Coastal Plain.

Great Cormorant: Numbers continue to be low in *Dare* NC, where a few regularly wintered at Oregon Inlet. On the other hand, the species has been easier to see now farther south at Fort Macon SP and Beaufort Inlet, where Martin Wall had as many as four all winter.

American White Pelican: Another increasing "Pelecaniform" in the region, this species continues to winter in locally sizable numbers along and near the coast. The late winter – early spring gathering below several dams (High Rock and Tuckertown) in the Yadkin River system NC started showing up in late Jan and by Feb there were counts up to 85 birds (on 5 Feb by Mark Montazer). This is a remarkably local phenomenon, not apparently reported anywhere else in the Carolinas owing to the great number of fish in the rocky shoals just below the dams. Three lakes in the "Triangle area" – Jordan, Falls, and Crabtree – had rare visits by birds this winter, with nine at the first site on 16 Feb (Ann Stinely) being notable. Noteworthy in far inland SC were nine at Saluda Lake

Greenville on 16 Feb (Bob Bouton), a shocking flock of 40 photographed at Lake Greenwood *Greenwood* on 27 Feb (Janet Ledebuhr), and 30 at Lake Wateree *Kershaw* on 10 Feb (Steve Patterson).

Brown Pelican: Very rare in winter in the Piedmont was one that remained at Parkwood Lake *Durham* NC from 10-17 Feb (Patrick Coin et al.).

American Bittern: Seldom reported from the Piedmont in winter, notable in SC were singles photographed at Conestee Nature Preserve *Greenville* from 6 Dec – 22 Feb (Mike Resch et al.) and at Rocky River Nature Park *Anderson* on 20 Feb (Steve Patterson).

Least Bittern: Remarkable in winter in far inland NC was one audio recorded (but not seen) at Owen Park *Buncombe* by Jay Wherley on 28 Dec. Other reports in the region this winter were singles seen at Lake Busbee *Horry* on 2 Jan (Stephen Thomas et al.), photographed at Huntington Beach SP on 24 Jan (Mark Domincovich, Ken Davis), heard at Walnut Hill Pond *Colleton* on 31 Dec (Lauren Morgens et al.), heard at Palmetto Bluff – Duck Pond *Beaufort* on 24 Jan (Gina Kent), one seen between impoundments MI5-6 at Mattamuskeet NWR *Hyde* during the CBC Winter Meeting on 20 Jan (Susan Campbell, m. obs.), and another the same day in a different part of the refuge (Trevor Sleight).

Green Heron: Lingering well inland was one photographed at River Park North *Pitt* NC from 16-20 Dec (Melody Bentz, Rich Cumming). One on 6 Jan at Dreher Island SP *Newberry* SC (Cherrie Sneed) and another at Harbison Pond *Richland* SC on 1 Feb (Grant Foster) were good finds for that state's interior.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: Marc Ribaudo saw an immature at Lake Benson *Wake* NC on 26 Jan for a very rare midwinter record in the NC Piedmont.

White Ibis: This species winters mainly in tidal areas of the Carolinas, and thus notable was a group all winter at River Park North *Pitt*, with a stunning count of 52 there on 4 Dec (Chandra and Elizabeth Biggerstaff); 41 were counted at nearby Wildwood Park on 26 Feb (Teresa Noel, Karen Hogan). They do regularly winter at Santee NWR in SC, as well as at other wetlands in the Lake Marion vicinity, with reports far too many to mention.

Glossy Ibis: There were scattered records into the far reaches of "Tidewater" in both states, ranging west to Pungo refuge *Washington*, Aurora *Beaufort*, New Bern area *Craven*, and Lake Waccamaw *Columbus* in NC, and Lake Busbee *Horry* SC. However, this species is a rather rare wintering bird in the Carolinas and seems to be on the slow decline at all seasons.

White-faced Ibis: An excellent find was one photographed at Savannah NWR, noted from 21 Jan – 3 Feb (Matthew Tozer, Dave Spangenburg et al.). This is a SC Review Status species.

Roseate Spoonbill: This "exploding" species in the Carolinas is becoming much more common every year, and individuals are lingering longer into fall. Now, a few were even

seen in NC this winter. One was observed at various impoundments at Pea Island NWR on 5 Dec (Jean and Robert Askew), and presumably the same bird again from 24-30 Dec (m. obs.). One was at Hatteras village *Dare* on 4 Jan (Haley Rosell), and it or another spent much of Jan and Feb on adjacent Ocracoke Island (Tucker Scully, Peter Vankevich). None were reported southward in NC, but there were numerous SC coastal records this winter as far north as Huntington Beach SP, where one was seen from 24-30 Dec (Derek Yoder et al.).

Swallow-tailed Kite: A quite early arrival was one photographed at Mount Pleasant *Charleston* SC by Jessica Strimpfel on 24 Feb. The species is an early-arriving breeding bird anyway, but first records usually occur around 10-15 Mar.

Golden Eagle: There were few reports this winter, but one photographed at Brumley Nature Preserve *Orange* NC on 5 Dec (Fleeta Chauvigne et al.) was an excellent find.

Rough-legged Hawk: Sadly, there were no winter reports, and this species seems to be wintering farther northward with each passing year, probably a factor of climate change (especially during the winter months), even though prey availability within its breeding range is a factor as well.

Barn Owl: This strongly declining resident species (though it is partially migratory) was reported at a number of Carolina sites, as usual, with one heard calling in northern *Henderson* NC from 26 Feb into Mar (Blake Cloninger et al.) being a very rare record for that area.

Short-eared Owl: Though there are occasional winter records well inland, the species seldom spends the entire season away from coastal and near-coastal marshes and wet fields. However, as many as three birds were found on 21 Dec at the Guilford County Farm in eastern *Guilford* NC by Joe Donohue et al., and dozens of birders saw them there through the end of Feb. Donahue and others saw another in flight at Cane Creek Reservoir *Orange* NC on 6 Dec. The few coastal reports came from the usual Alligator River NWR fields on several occasions (Jeff Lewis et al.), one photographed at Cedar Island NWR *Carteret* on 26 Feb (Martin Wall), and one seen at Marsh Island *Charleston* on 15 Jan (Felicia Sanders).

Short-eared Owl, 26 Dec 23, Guilford County, NC. Photograph by Kent Fiala.

Northern Saw-whet Owl: There were, disappointingly, no reports away from the mountains this winter. However, it does occur in much of the NC mountains at all seasons. Rarely reported in winter there were one responding to a recording in the Blowing Rock *Watauga* area on 15 Dec

(Steve Dowlan) and one seen in Asheville *Buncombe* on 25 Jan (Claire Jarvs).

Merlin: This species seems to be increasing as a wintering bird in the region. Though it is not a winter resident away from the lower Coastal Plain of the Carolinas, the many dozens of records in all parts of the two states are a clear sign that Merlins do spend at least a few days in the majority of counties.

Peregrine Falcon: As with the Merlin, records all across the Carolinas in winter are on the rise in the past decade, though the species is not as frequently seen. A few Peregrines do appear to remain in a local area all winter well inland, even in cities.

Ash-throated Flycatcher: Hardly any songbird species has increased as a winter visitor in recent decades as this species. North Carolina had far too many reports to list them all, but at least four (or more) spent the entire winter at Alligator River NWR (Jeff Lewis et al.), and one or two were also often seen at Pocosin Lakes NWR. The only Piedmont report was one photographed at Jordan Lake *Chatham* from 5-7 Dec (Ron Martin et al.). Others in the NC Coastal Plain were one photographed at Mount Olive *Wayne* on 14 Dec (Liling Warren, Alicia Bachman), three (!) photographed at Beartrack Farm *Sampson* on 11 Jan (Sharon Funderburk et al.), one photographed at Wildwood Park *Pitt* from 22 Jan – 4 Feb (Ricky Davis et al.), and up to two at Martin Marietta Park *Craven* from 18 Dec – 19 Feb (Lester Coble et al.). Other notable coastal NC reports were singles photographed at Jarvisburg *Currituck* on 18 Jan (Pamela Riddick), at Buxton *Dare* on 5 Dec (Paul Laurent et al.), at Hobucken *Pamlico* on 19 Dec (Martin Wall, John Fussell), and at North River Farms *Carteret* on 16 Dec and 6 Feb (Wall et al.). South Carolina had singles photographed at Congaree Creek Heritage Preserve *Lexington* on 5 Jan (Eli Benosky), in *Georgetown* on 29 Dec (Jay Chandler et al.), at Patriot's Point *Charleston* from 16-20 Feb (Craig Watson, Pamela Ford et al.), at Hardeeville *Jasper* on 30 Dec (Andy Jones), and at Hilton Head Island *Beaufort* on 27 Jan (Heather Buttonow, Tammy Hester, et al.).

Ash-throated Flycatcher, 25 Jan 24, Dare County, NC. Photograph by Greg Perry.

Western Kingbird: One was photographed at Bayboro *Pamlico* on 17 Feb (Jacob Clark). Could this be the same bird seen in that county near Merritt in Nov and into early Dec? Another was seen near Southport *Brunswick* from 31 Dec -13 Jan (Sam Cooper, Jacob Annis et al.). South Carolina had a number of coastal reports, including three together at Patriot's Point *Charleston* on 4 Feb (Craig Watson, Pamela Ford); whereas

one far inland along Whitehouse Road *Richland* from 28 Dec – 1 Jan (John Grego et al.) was most unusual.

Least Flycatcher: One was a very rare winter record for the Carolinas as photographed and audio recorded by Matt Johnson, Craig Watson, and Pamela Ford on 4 Feb at Patriot's Point SC.

Western Flycatcher: Alex Nickley photographed one in a tiny park in downtown Durham NC on 2 Jan, and this bird was seen by dozens of birders through 14 Jan. This represents the fourth state record, pending acceptance by the NC BRC.

White-eyed Vireo: Though small numbers winter near/along the coast of SC into southern NC, there were plenty of inland sightings. Far inland in winter was one photographed by Rob Rogers at Pilot Mountain SP *Surry* NC on 21 Dec, and one apparently overwintered at Flat River Waterfowl Impoundment *Durham*, being reported on several occasions in all three months (m. obs.). Records in that state were widespread in the inner Coastal Plain, where some may well have overwintered also. Reports in far upstate SC were of one seen in *Anderson* on 10 Dec (Brian Barchus), one photographed at Conestee Nature Preserve *Greenville* from 11 Jan – 29 Feb (Scott Gruwell et al.), and one seen at Spartanburg on 14 Feb (Carole Anderson).

Blue-headed Vireo: As might be expected in such a record-warmth season, the species wintered in greater numbers than usual, all across the Piedmont and Coastal Plain of both states. Normally, the species overwinters into the lower Piedmont, but it is likely that many birds overwintered much farther westward.

Warbling Vireo: Extremely rare at Pea Island NWR at any season, one photographed there on 5 Dec by Andrew Thornton was an exceptional record. This seems to be the fourth NC winter record.

Loggerhead Shrike: This slowly declining species was seen farther inland or northward than usual this season, highlighted by one photographed by Dale Reynolds on 30 Dec at Roaring River *Wilkes* NC.

Fish Crow: This species is slowly "colonizing" the NC mountains, where only a decade ago was a rarity in most counties there. Birds are now seemingly overwintering as high as 3000-3500 feet elevation, based on records of several birds all season at Appalachian State University *Watauga* (Maxwell Ramey, Will Bennett).

Horned Lark: A count of 21 birds at a site in *Carteret* NC on 12 Dec (Martin Wall) was excellent for the southern half of that state's coast, and a flyover bird at Oregon Inlet *Dare* on 6 Dec (Andrew Thornton) was notable for the Outer Banks.

Tree Swallow: This species typically arrives in inland sites in March, but the much milder winter than usual meant that many observers, even in the mountains, were seeing them in the latter half of Feb.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: This species formerly was almost unheard of in late fall and winter in our area. However, there have been a handful of recent winter records in both states, and this winter three to four were seen at Yates Mill County Park *Wake* from 6-12 Dec (Adam Prince et al.), and Dale Lambert saw up to three a few miles away in Cary from 2-17 Dec. Two photographed by Cody Little at a quarry pond on 7 Dec in *Mecklenburg* were also very late. A few birds were seen at several SC sites starting in mid-Feb, though these were certainly very early arrivals.

Cave Swallow: Records of this Southwestern species have "dried up" in the past few years, especially in winter. Sadly, there were no accepted eBird reports from the Carolinas this winter.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: This irruptive species, unfortunately, "stayed put" this late fall and winter, and nearly all reports were from the mountains, where it breeds at middle and higher elevations. Most active observers failed to see the species at all downstate.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: As expected in a milder than normal winter, more birds lingered well inland than usual, though few probably overwintered in the Piedmont. One photographed at Boone *Watauga* NC on 15 Dec (Paul Laurent et al.) was unusually late for the mountain region.

House Wren: Many more birds were reported far inland than usual this winter, with even some mountain reports in Jan. The species winters regularly into the lower Piedmont, so it is not clear if birds farther west actually overwintered.

Sedge Wren: Notable well inland in NC were singles found at the N.C. State University farm in *Durham* on 8 Dec (Ron Martin), at the Jordan Lake dam from 23 Dec – 1 Jan (Mark Montazer et al.), one at the Quail Roost area of northern *Durham* from 10 Feb – Mar (Bruce Young et al.), and up to three at Lake Surf *Moore* from 16-17 Dec (John Bird, Michael McCloy).

Marsh Wren: Over-wintering birds typically are found in coastal and tidewater areas, and thus singles noted well inland in NC were noteworthy at a marsh at Roanoke Rapids Lake *Northampton* NC on both 9 Dec and 3 Feb (Loren Hintz), and at the Lumbee Tribe Cultural Center *Robeson* NC from 23 Jan – 20 Feb (Katherine Thorington et al.). In SC notable far inland were singles at the Conestee Nature Preserve on 8-9 Dec (Ventures Birding et al.) and in *Richland* from 2 Jan – 19 Feb (Aaron Olson et al.).

Townsend's Solitaire: Remarkable, and just the second record for SC, pending acceptance by the SC BRC, was one photographed at Forty Acre Rock Heritage Preserve *Lancaster* on 19 Dec by Ron Ahle. That state's first record was from the coast in Fall 2020, whereas NC's two accepted records are from the higher mountains.

Varied Thrush: North Carolina's seventh state record, and first from the Coastal Plain province, was one photographed at Airlie Gardens *New Hanover* on 3 Feb (Jamie Adams, Ian McDonald); however, it seemed to have quickly disappeared and was not seen on later dates.

Evening Grosbeak: Winter 2023-24 was a very poor one for this irruptive species, not only in the Carolinas (with no accepted reports), but in the Eastern states. The eBird map for this winter shows barely four or five accepted records south of New York state!

Purple Finch: Unlike with the Evening Grosbeak and Red-breasted Nuthatch, this irruptive species was generally uncommon to fairly common across most of our region, not one of the biggest winters of recent years, but still widely scattered such that most active observers probably saw one to several. Records this winter were lacking only for southern SC and parts of the NC Outer Banks and adjacent mainland.

Common Redpoll: This species remained far north of the Carolinas this winter, with no reports here or south of Pennsylvania, according to eBird data.

Red Crossbill: Though there were many NC reports this winter, all came from the mountains, where the species (Song Type 1) breeds. The form that sporadically occurs downstate in winter, believed to be mainly Song Type 12, also did not seem to move far from its Northern breeding grounds this winter. This species did have small to moderate irruptions into the Carolinas over the previous several winters.

White-winged Crossbill: As with the Common Redpoll, reports in the East were essentially absent south of New England and New York.

Pine Siskin: Numbers were far below those of last winter and in many other major invasion years; however, small to moderate numbers did range across all parts of the Carolinas, even to the southern tip of SC. The highest eBird list counts, however, were mainly in the lower double digits.

Lapland Longspur: There were fewer reports than usual this winter. These were of one seen south of Raleigh *Wake* on 16 Dec (Steve Shultz, Susan Campbell et al.), as many as three photographed along Brent Haigler Road *Union* NC from 4-20 Feb (Martina Nordstrand et al.), and one seen at Townville *Anderson* SC on 11 Feb (Andy Norris).

Snow Bunting, 19 Jan 24,
Dare County, NC.
Photograph by Charles Byrne.

Snow Bunting: This species had been in a long decline as a winter species along the NC coast in recent years. For whatever reason, in this milder winter than normal, there was a small "invasion". A "huge" flock, reaching as many as 33 birds on 30 Jan, remained at the northern end of Pea Island NWR from Nov to at least 17 Feb (m. obs.)! At Cape Hatteras Point, ten were photographed on 13 Dec (Scott Hartley), with several additional reports there a few weeks later; at least three remained to 20 Jan (Taylor Piephoff, Carolina Bird Club). The only other winter reports were of two

photographed by Jeremy Wrenn at Ocracoke *Hyde* on 30 Dec and one photographed by George Levtchouk at Bird Island *Brunswick* on 20 Dec.

Grasshopper Sparrow: Reports this season were singles seen by Mike Manetz at Lake Devin *Granville* NC in Nov and to 2 Dec, one on 2 Dec south of Raleigh (Christopher Esposito), at least one seen and photographed at North River Farms *Carteret* NC from 31 Dec – 14 Jan (Martin Wall et al.), one at a Clemson University research station *Anderson* SC on 22 Feb (Steve Patterson), one in *Aiken* SC on 23 Dec (Matt Malin), and three to four at a field near Fort Motte *Calhoun* SC from 17-19 Feb (Michelle Wilcox, Jerry Griggs et al.). This species is very secretive in winter and is rather poorly known as to where it regularly overwinters. In all likelihood, it routinely occurs north at least to *Carteret* NC and *Calhoun* SC at this season.

Lark Sparrow: This sparrow is nowhere regular in winter in the Carolinas, even though individuals present in early winter often survive the season, at least near the coast. The numerous NC reports were of singles at Kill Devil Hills *Dare* on 16 Dec (Sarah Toner), one on that day at Claridge State Nursery *Wayne* (Zane Fish, Ash Ranson), on Callie Road *Cumberland* on 20 Feb (Yvonne Porter), and one at Fort Fisher *New Hanover* from 5 Dec – 25 Feb (Sam Cooper, m. obs.). In SC was one at Shellwood Acre *Horry* from 24 Dec – 2 Feb (Carol Boyd et al.) and another at Fort Moultrie National Monument *Charleston* on 24 Dec (Craig Watson, Andy Harrison et al.).

Clay-colored Sparrow: Seldom found inland in winter, one lingered in Raleigh from 2 Jan – 4 Feb (Harry LeGrand et al.), one of the longest spans of dates for an inland bird. Along the coast, where rare but not unexpected, singles were at Beaufort *Carteret* on 30 Dec (Martin Wall), in Wilmington on 12 Jan (Silas Hernandez, John Carpenter), at Fort Fisher *New Hanover* on 25 Feb (Sam Cooper), and at Fort Moultrie *Charleston* from 9-28 Dec (Marc Regnier et al.). At a semi-regular wintering locale, Martin Wall and others saw up to three at North River Farms from 9 Dec – 18 Feb.

Harris's Sparrow: North Carolina's tenth state record, and third for the mountains, was one that remained with a flock of White-crowned Sparrows essentially all winter, at Warren Wilson College in Swannanoa *Buncombe*. It was first found on 21 Dec (Carly Flannery, m. obs.) and was seen and photographed almost daily at least to 27 Feb. One photographed by Graham Norman at farm fields in *Burke* NC from 1 Jan – 17 Feb was on private property and was greatly overshadowed by the Swannanoa bird, but nonetheless was the state's 11th record.

Harris's Sparrow, 1 Jan 24, Buncombe County, NC. Photograph by Ian McDonald.

Vesper Sparrow: Declining as a wintering bird in recent decades, the relatively mild winter allowed many more to remain far inland at this season. As many as four wintered near the Harris's Sparrow at

Swannanoa, noted from 1 Jan – 19 Feb (Bill Hooker et al.), very rare for the mountains at this season. One was photographed at Rockwell Fields *Henderson* NC on 9 and 26 Feb (Galen Goodrum) for another scarce winter record for the mountains.

LeConte's Sparrow: Another declining bird in our region, there was just a single report – one photographed at the Watkins tract in *Calhoun* SC on 28 Jan (Matt Johnson party).

Henslow's Sparrow: This highly secretive bird in winter was detected only twice this season, both in SC. One was seen at the Donnelley Wildlife Management Area *Colleton* on 24 Dec (Philip Whitlow). Remarkably as many as four were seen and photographed at the "magical" field near Fort Motte *Calhoun* on 19 Feb (Jerry Griggs, Columbia Audubon Society trip). One had been seen here as early as 29 Dec (Ron Ahle). Also present at this "hotspot" this winter were Painted Bunting, Sedge Wren, LeConte's Sparrow, and Grasshopper Sparrows (four).

Lincoln's Sparrow: Small numbers winter in the Coastal Plain, but it is scarce farther inland in winter. Notable far inland in NC were singles photographed at Riverbend Park *Catawba* on 6 Jan (Ian and Janelle McDonald), seen at Yadkin Memorial Park in that county on 29 Dec (David Disher), and photographed at Yates Mill park *Wake* on 5 Feb (Adam Prince). Far inland in SC were singles at Conestee Nature Preserve on 23 and 30 Dec (Tim Kalbach, Samantha Starr), at Wilson Farm *Greenville* on 30 Dec (Donnie Coody et al.), and in *Anderson* on 10 Feb (Andy Norris).

Yellow-breasted Chat: In addition to several coastal reports, as usual in winter, one photographed well inland at Santee NWR on 17 Jan (Ron Ahle) was an excellent find.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: There was just a single accepted eBird report for the season, an adult male photographed at Chicorawood Plantation *Georgetown* SC on 29 Dec (Mandy Johnson et al.).

Bobolink: Essentially not found in the United States in winter, one photographed on 8 Dec at Chicora (East) *Georgetown* SC by Chris Hill and party was a very late departing fall migrant.

Bullock's Oriole, 23 Jan 24, Dare County, NC. Photograph by Karen Lebing.

Bullock's Oriole: This was an exceptional winter for this Western visitor in the region. North Carolina had a remarkable five records – singles at feeders photographed near Fuquay-Varina *Wake* from 12 Jan – Mar (Patricia Kitto, m. obs.), one at Manteo *Dare* on 23 Jan (Paul Creef, Andrew Thornton), in Greenville *Pitt* on 19 Feb (Chandra and Elizabeth Biggerstaff), one or two at Hertford *Perquimans* on 31 Dec (David Schleeper), and in Beaufort *Carteret*

from 9 Dec -19 Jan (Chantal Taunton et al.). The first two birds were adult males. South Carolina had one record – an adult male at a feeder in Mount Pleasant on 15 Feb (Tom and Kathy McNeil). Several of these were present on earlier dates than listed above but were either not yet confirmed or not posted to eBird.

Baltimore Oriole: The milder than usual winter, and perhaps more than the usual number of feeder watchers, was responsible for large numbers of reports this season. It winters regularly inland to the central NC Piedmont cities and towns, and to northwestern SC; so notable west of that region was one lingering in *Buncombe* on 1 Dec (Tiffany Means).

Rusty Blackbird: About a decade ago there was considerable concern about a strong decline in continental numbers of this blackbird, at least in the winter months. However, it has now seemingly returned to pre-concern population levels, based on hundreds of reports across the region, with many reports in middle to high double digits and a few in triple digits, especially at Lake Benson *Wake*.

Brewer's Blackbird: This species winters sparingly in Georgia, and thus records from western NC, at least in migration, are not unusual. But rare in winter – or perhaps very early spring migrants – were singles photographed at the Biltmore Estate *Buncombe* from 10-14 Feb (Jay Wherley, Walter Somerville), seen at Hooper Lane *Henderson* on 19 Feb (Shane Myers), and seen at Just Ripe Farm *Transylvania* on 26 Feb (Michael Plauche). However, large numbers for SC were noted at Townville *Anderson*, where as many as 58 birds were counted there from 1-19 Dec (Neil Owens et al.); and in nearby *Oconee*, where 60 were photographed by Steve Patterson and Joe and Liz Dunkleman on 17 Dec and two remained to 3 Jan. At Santee NWR, a count of 25 was excellent on 23 Dec, as photographed by John Grego; and six were photographed in *Allendale* on 27 Jan (David Dobson).

Ovenbird: One seen at Eastover *Richland* SC on 20 Feb by Stephane Menu was notable in winter for that state, as was one far inland in NC photographed in *Guilford* on 26 Jan (unknown observer). Along the NC coast in *Dare*, notable was one photographed at Kitty Hawk on 18 Dec (Jeff Lewis), one photographed at North End Park on Roanoke Island on 1 Feb (Pat Draisey), and at least two in Buxton Woods all winter, where it does routinely spend the season (Daniel Irons et al.).

Worm-eating Warbler: Though not photographed, one carefully seen and described by Alan Kneidel at Alexander Street Park *Mecklenburg* on 12 Jan was about the third NC winter record, though none of these appear to have been photographed.

Northern Waterthrush: Winter records of this species have been accumulating in the last decade, though are still very rare. In NC this season were singles photographed at Blair Mill Park *Union* on 5 Dec (Martina Nordstrand) and at Mattamuskeet NWR on 8 Dec (Allen Bryan, Wings Over Water group). In SC, one was seen at Magnolia Gardens *Charleston* on 15 Dec (David McConnell) and one was photographed at Cypress Wetlands *Beaufort* from 11-15 Feb (Sally Jessee et al.).

Tennessee Warbler: One was photographed by Angie Davis at feeders in her yard in *Gaston* NC, from 14 Feb – Mar, likely the longest-staying winter record for this species in the region. This state has about seven or eight previous winter records.

Orange-crowned Warbler: Formerly quite rare in winter west of the Fall Line, the species is wintering farther inland with each passing year or two. It was recorded from four locales in the central and southern NC mountains, though there were no such state reports from the northern mountains or northwestern Piedmont.

Nashville Warbler: One to several individuals typically are being found in winter in the Carolinas in recent years. This season had reports of singles from the Gastonia area NC on 16 Dec (Greg Hays); and in SC from *Pickens* on 8 Feb (Linda Montgomery), at Park West *Horry* on 29 Dec (Scott Olmstead), in *Dorchester* on 4 Dec (Marcie Daniels), in *Berkeley* on 4 Jan (Brad Sale, Steven Roys), and at Magnolia Gardens *Charleston* on 1 Feb (Todd Grantham).

American Redstart: Notable at this season were singles, all in SC, at Lake Cunningham *Greenville* on 18 Dec (Denise DuPon), at Rocky River Nature Park *Anderson* on 1 Jan (Glen Peterson), and photographed at Lyme Bay *Lexington* from 9 Dec – 14 Jan (Jerry Griggs). The last bird was an adult male.

Cape May Warbler: This former "pure migrant" has been staying all winter at a few feeders in the Carolinas in recent years. This winter, all reports were along the coast; from north to south, singles were seen at Colington *Dare* on 16 Dec (Sarah Toner), photographed in Buxton Woods *Dare* on 1 Dec (Benjamin Filreis, Christopher Hinkle), photographed at Beaufort *Carteret* on 29 Dec (Martin Wall), and photographed at a feeder in North Myrtle Beach SC from 14 Dec – 23 Jan (Deb Winter).

Northern Parula: Often not reported at all in the three winter months, there were a remarkable number of these this season. In NC reports came from a feeder in *Chatham* from 30 Dec – 27 Feb (Spike Millington), at Bass Lake *Wake* on 20 Dec (Lawrence Zoller) and again there from 13-17 Feb (Debbie Kosater, Jeffrey Johnson), in Raleigh on 3 Dec (Phil Doerr, Clyde Sorenson), and at Buxton on 1 Dec (Benjamin Filreis, Christopher Hinkle). South Carolina has eight locales with winter records!

Yellow Warbler: A remarkably long-staying individual was photographed by Kevin Kubach near Clemson University *Pickens* SC from 8 Feb – Mar. There are very few winter records for this species in the Piedmont province.

Palm Warbler: Many more individuals lingered or stayed farther inland than usual this winter, with many reports from the central and southern NC mountains, where scarce at this season.

Yellow-throated Warbler: Most unusual in the Piedmont in winter were single birds photographed at the Davidson College campus *Mecklenburg* on 18 Dec (Greg Hay et al.), at a feeder in nearby Cornelius from 6 Jan – 26 Feb (M. Wright), at a feeder in Durham from 29 Dec – 14 Jan (Crawford Wilson), and two in a yard in southern *Wake* on 18-19 Feb (Grayson Barefoot). There were so many reports from the *Richland* and *Aiken* areas

in SC that the species might well be overwintering regularly now in these areas at the inner edge of the Coastal Plain.

Prairie Warbler: This species winters sparingly along the region's coast, at least barely into North Carolina. There were many such report this season, even north to Bodie Island *Dare* on 3 Feb (Meredith Ball, m. obs.). However, there were no reports away from tidal waters this winter.

Wilson's Warbler: Formerly very rare in winter, this season there was a remarkable flurry of records. In NC, single birds were photographed near Saxapahaw *Alamance* from 4-7 Feb (Lindsay Frauen, Dan Kaplan et al.), at Gastonia on 16 Dec (Ron Clark, Steve Coggin), at Copperhead Island *Mecklenburg* from 7 Dec – 21 Jan (Kristen Jackson, Cody Little et al.), in Raleigh from 16 Feb into Mar (Chip Davis et al.), and in *Cumberland* from 14-17 Dec (Brian Bockhahn et al.). In SC, single birds were seen at Santee NWR on 23 Dec (John Grego), photographed in *Berkeley* on 19 Feb (Steve Rhodes, Roy Howard), at Hanahan *Berkeley* on 13 Jan (Steven Roys), and photographed at Savannah NWR from 21 Jan – 22 Feb (Steve Rappaport, m. obs.).

Summer Tanager: This species has a penchant for appearing at feeders in winter in recent years. This season, there were single birds in NC seen near Mint Hill *Mecklenburg* on 18 and 21 Jan (Judy Walker), photographed in Morehead City on 17 Jan (John Fussell), photographed in *Pitt* on 10 Jan (Suzanne Harrington), and photographed in *Orange* on 17 Feb (Kat Cox). The last two were adult males. In SC, singles were photographed at Kiawah River *Charleston* on 2 Feb (Tyler Sharer), in *Lexington* from 28 Jan – 25 Feb (Allison Smith), and on Harbor Island *Beaufort* on 13 Jan (Tony and Rose Johnson); the first of these three was an adult male.

Western Tanager: Unlike the Summer Tanager, this Western species shows up routinely a few times in the region each winter. However, there were so many records in Winter 2023-24 that only a summary can be given here. In NC, birds were noted in *Mecklenburg* (three sites), *Durham* (two), *Wake* (two), *Moore* (one), *Dare* (two), *Carteret* (one), and *New Hanover* (one). In SC, there were reports from *Dorchester* (one), *Berkeley* (one), and *Beaufort* (one). Full details of all records can be found on the eBird website.

Western Tanager, 14 Jan 24, Wake County, NC. Photograph by Kent Fiala.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: A female at a feeder in *Wake* was late departing on 1 Dec, as noted by Jan Heard. Liling Warren photographed another at Pettigrew SP *Washington* NC on 15 Dec.

Black-headed Grosbeak: For whatever reason, winter records (usually at feeders) have declined in the Eastern states in recent years, and again there were no reports for the Carolinas this winter despite the rather mild temperatures and the numbers of other large lingering passerines such as orioles and tanagers being found at feeders.

Blue Grosbeak: Quite notable in winter, singles were photographed at a feeder in Burlington *Alamance* NC from 24 Feb into Mar (Constance Griner), seen near Gastonia on 16 Dec (Greg Hays, Taylor Piephoff), photographed along the Rocky River *Cabarrus* NC on 8 Dec (Steven Fasciana), and photographed at a feeder in *Lexington* SC on 29 Feb (Irvin Pitts).

Painted Bunting: This species now winters regularly at sites along the coast, even north of its breeding range (which is only north to *Carteret*). There were birds at a handful of sites along the *Dare* coast ranging north to Duck, and birds were found far inland in NC in Winterville *Pitt*, Goldsboro, Fayetteville, and Charlotte. Inland SC birds were quite numerous, as far west as *Marlboro, Lexington, Richland*, and *Aiken* counties.

Dickcissel: Though a few birds overwinter along the coast, notable far inland at this season was one photographed at a Chapel Hill feeder from 18 Dec – 3 Jan (Nan Dewire). One spent most of the winter at a feeder in Nags Head, where noted from 2 Jan – 17 Feb (Peggy Eubank et al.).

Did You Know?

Full copies of *The Chat* dating back to the very first issue, March 1937, are available for viewing online. Find these and more at:
https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/chat/

The Chat

BULLETIN OF THE NORTH CAROLINA BIRD CLUB
PUBLISHED AT RALEIGH, N. C.

JOHN H. GREY, JR., EDITOR
1719 PARK DRIVE

VOL I March, 1937 No. 1

Artists and Aves find New Voices in "The Birdsong Project" (And We Should Listen)

Jane Bailey
PO Box 542
Manteo, NC 27954
janesbailey712@gmail.com

Music is a vehicle for reprieve, for escape, which is true for both the songwriter and the listener. And what could you call your extra Sunday outing to check out your favorite honey hole, with scope and field guide in hand, if not the same? It's no secret that earbuds in, feet tapping, or eyes affixed to a far-off canopy with binos in hand means "I'm doing me right now, and this is not an invite to chat."

Which, at the same time music or birding provides an escape, those same excursions create an intimate connection between music and listener, bird and birder. While out and about you might glimpse a pair of travelers on a bus nudging one another to listen to the song they're playing, or you'll see a birder gesturing to present company, wanting to share the rarity they just discovered. Both the songs and birds we love resonate with those "of a feather," and what is a song if not heard? What is an eBird checklist if not shared with your flock?

The artists we appreciate share stories that resonate with us, with our walk of life. Music appreciated is a song shared between two, and we of the birding variety are intimately familiar with the songs sung in the crucible of nature. Birders hear the songs that are always around us (if we are present to listen).

The soft *hey sweetie* of Carolina Chickadees and *mews mews* of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers are a symphony to those inclined to stay for the chorus. Birders are phenomenal at picking out birdsong and hearing what our feathered friends have to say. We are rapt when we listen. We hang onto every word and every note. Birdsong connects us to the birds we care for and to kindred spirits who appreciate them as much as we do.

This rich connection, the world intertwined between music and birds, is what "For the Birds: The Birdsong Project" is all about. Created by music producers and lifelong friends Randall Poster and Rebecca Reagan, "The Birdsong Project" creates a platform for creatives, birders, ornithologists, and bird lovers of every pedigree to come together for the birds that inspire and are dear to each of us. The spirit of the project is rooted in the collaboration between visual and musical artists, the folks like you and me who do it for the birds, and every feather in between. The project culminated into 20 LPs, each with its own cover art and songs that were all inspired by the how the artists wanted to use their work "for the birds."

The 172-song compilation includes pieces from the English classical discipline to modern hip hop, making genre-bending albums that nail exactly why birds are so special to us. The albums are varied, funky, a little weird even, but the songs that resonate with us shake us to our core, because we know we sing that exact same song too.

"For the Birds" is unique in that the variety of artists creates a breadth of music that is inspired by a profusion of elements taken from nature. Some artists go full instrumental, encapsulating a pure feeling they experience when in the midst of birdsong. Others tell

stories or sing of memories of an early connection with nature that they've carried with them into adulthood. Some songs take us on the journey *of* a bird with crashing crescendos that energize us for a migration northward as in "Fly On" by Karen Elson. Soft guitar solos from Jim James are evocative of watching soft snowflakes fall with a flock of Dark-eyed Juncos quietly munching seed from a full feeder. If you're a fan of spoken word, poems intersperse the songs and provide a new form of listening to the material.

"The Birdsong Project" is a massive creative undertaking that bridges genre and species gaps to create the collaborative space that Poster and Reagan envisioned. While discussing the meaning of birdsong, and how it inspires us, artists and listeners spend more time thinking about what we derive from natural spaces. Bird life, how we treat these resources in turn, and the threats they face are common themes throughout the project.

The albums provide a worthwhile exploration into how creatives of all walks are inspired to capture their own music of birdsong. Exploring new music and storytelling is a highlight of the individual (yes, you and me) participating by listening to the project and expanding an appreciation of how birds play a role in our livelihoods. "The Birdsong Project" provides us a new avenue to connect with the bird-loving community and listen to the stories that birds have to say with inspiration anew.

If you see a musical sojourn in your future, settle into an easy chair, the one next to the window with best birdfeeder, and surround yourself with "The Birdsong Project." The full set of LPs are available from a select number of large box vinyl retailers (detailed at https://www.thebirdsongproject.com/shop) with proceeds donated to the Audubon Society. The LPs are also available for free to stream on large streaming services such as Spotify and Apple Music.

H. Douglas Pratt

CAROLINA BIRD CLUB

www.carolinabirdclub.org

The Carolina Bird Club is a non-profit organization which represents and supports the birding community in the Carolinas through its official website, publications, meetings, workshops, trips, and partnerships, whose mission is

- To promote the observation, enjoyment, and study of birds.
- To provide opportunities for birders to become acquainted, and to share information and experience.
- To maintain well-documented records of birds in the Carolinas.
- To support the protection and conservation of birds and their habitats and foster an appreciation and respect of natural resources.
- To promote educational opportunities in bird and nature study.
- To support research on birds of the Carolinas and their habitats.

Membership is open to all persons interested in the conservation, natural history, and study of wildlife with particular emphasis on birds. Dues, contributions, and bequests to the Club may be deductible from state and federal income and estate taxes to the extent allowable. Pay dues or make donations at https://carolinabirdclub.org/dues. Make change of address at https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/members/profile. Send correspondence regarding membership matters to the Headquarters Secretary. Answers to questions about the club might be found at https://carolinabirdclub.org/about.html.

ANNUAL DUES

Individual or non-profit	$30.00
Family	$35.00
Student	$15.00
Sustaining and businesses	$30.00
Patron	$50.00 and up
Life Membership (payable in four consecutive $125 installments)	$500.00
Associate Life Membership (in same household as life member)	$100.00

ELECTED OFFICERS

President	Susan Campbell, Apex NC	susan@ncaves.com
NC Vice-Presidents	Christine Stoughton Root, Arapahoe NC	
	Katie Greenberg, Arden NC	
SC Vice-President	Julie Davis, Pawleys Island SC	
Secretary	Karaleah Reichart, Raleigh NC	
Treasurer	Jared Miles, Charlotte NC	
NC Members-at-Large	Betsy Kane, Washington NC	
	Paul Laurent, Banner Elk NC	
	Bob Lewis, Durham NC	
	Barbara “Kitty” Reynolds, Asheville NC	
SC Members-at-Large	Richard Hayes, Charleston SC	
	Jennifer Roberts, Columbia SC	

EX-OFFICIO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chat Editor	Steve Shultz, Apex, NC	chat@carolinabirdclub.org
Newsletter Editor	Steve Dowlan, Vilas, NC	newsletter@carolinabirdclub.org
Website Editor	Kent Fiala, Hillsborough, NC	webeditor@carolinabirdclub.org
Immediate Past President	Steve Tracy, Gastonia, NC	

HEADQUARTERS SECRETARY

Amanda Laurent	1800 Meadow Ave Banner Elk NC 28604	hq@carolinabirdclub.org

The Chat

Vol. 88 Summer 2024 No. 3

Carolina Bird Club
www.carolinabirdclub.org

The Quarterly Bulletin of the Carolina Bird Club, Inc.
The Ornithological Society of the Carolinas

THE CHAT

ISSN No. 0009-1987

Quarterly Bulletin of Carolina Bird Club, Inc.

1909 Lakepark Drive, Raleigh NC 27612

Vol. 88 **Summer 2024** **No. 3**

General Field Notes Editors
North Carolina **Christina Harvey**
South Carolina **William Post**

Briefs for the Files **Harry LeGrand**

Editor **Steve Shultz**
2404 Bristers Spring Way
Apex, NC 27523
chat@carolinabirdclub.org

THE CHAT is published quarterly by the Carolina Bird Club, Inc., 1800 Meadow Avenue, Banner Elk NC 28604. Subscription price $30 per year.

Copyright © 2024 by Carolina Bird Club, Inc. Except for purposes of review, material contained herein may not be reproduced without written permission from the Carolina Bird Club, Inc.

Articles

2023 Annual Report of the North Carolina Bird Records Committee
Nathan A. Swick, et. al. 53

Briefs for the Files

Spring 2024 *Harry LeGrand* 59

Fifty Years Ago in The Chat

June 1974 *Steve Shultz* 82

Cover: Swallow-tailed Kite, 20 Jun 2024, Burgaw, Pender County, NC.
Photograph by Mark Shields.

2023 Annual Report of the North Carolina Bird Records Committee

Nathan A. Swick[1], Chair, Lucas R. Bobay, Sam Cooper, Jacob A. Farmer, Ryan Justice, J. Dwayne Martin, Brian J. O'Shea, Jeffrey S. Pippen, Joshua L. Southern
[1]4904 Jessup Grove Rd., Greensboro, NC 27410
nswick@aba.org

For 2023, the North Carolina Bird Records Committee (NCBRC) included the addition of Sam Cooper, Brian O'Shea, and Nathan Swick as voting members, with Swick serving as chair. Ed Corey and Martina Nordstrand cycled off for their hiatus of at least one year. Richard J. Davis and Harry E. LeGrand Jr. continued in their capacities as non-voting members; LeGrand compiled this report.

Accepted as Valid

The following reports were judged to be acceptable.

White-crowned Pigeon (*Patagioenas leucocephala*) (23-01). The NCBRC unanimously accepted (9-0) a photographic report by Jesse Anderson from a park in Carolina Beach in *New Hanover* County, on 31 December 2022. The presence of photos places this first state record onto the Definitive List.

White-crowned Pigeon, 31 December 2022, New Hanover County, NC. Photograph by Jesse Anderson.

Red-footed Booby (*Sula sula*) (23-02). This second state record, and first for an inland site, was unanimously accepted (9-0) by the NCBRC. The brown morph individual was seen perched on a boardwalk railing at Yates Mill Pond in *Wake* County on 3 March 2023, a remarkably early date for this tropical species in the United States. Bob Oberfelder and many others provided excellent photos to document the record. As the first record – far offshore – contained a decent photo, the species is already on the Definitive List.

Plumbeous Vireo (*Vireo plumbeus*) (23-04). An individual of this species, primarily found in the Rocky Mountains, was unanimously accepted (9-0) by the NCBRC. David True heard it singing on Colington Island in *Dare* County, on 7 June 2023, and he obtained several excellent photos. With the photos being accepted, this first state record places the species directly onto the Definitive List.

Crested Caracara (*Caracara plancus*) (23-05). The NCBRC unanimously accepted (9-0) a photographic report of an individual found by Jeff Marcus alongside NC 20 near Lumber Bridge in *Robeson* County, on 3 March 2023. This is the first far inland record and the third accepted record for the state; the species is already on the Definitive List.

Heermann's Gull (*Larus heermanni*) (23-06). One adult photographed by Matthew Press at Cape Lookout in *Carteret* County on 1 July 2023 was unanimously accepted (9-0). This is the second state record, with the first only a few months earlier. The species is already on the Definitive List. There have been several additional coastal sightings with photos between these two records, but it seems likely that just one or at most two individuals are responsible for these records.

Pacific Golden-Plover (*Pluvialis fulva*) (23-07). The NCBRC unanimously accepted (9-0) a photo report of an individual from Cape Hatteras Point in *Dare* County on 30 July 2023. It seems extremely likely that this is the same bird that has returned to this site annually since 2019! Thus, it is difficult to say how many records the state now has, though it is already on the Definitive List.

American Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*) (23-08). In late August 2023, Hurricane Idalia passed north between the Yucatan Peninsula and Cuba, where sizable numbers of this species occur. As a result, over the following several days this species showed up in numerous Eastern states, and on 2 September 2023 Jeff Lewis spotted and photographed a flock of 11 birds at Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge in *Dare* County. This flock increased by a handful of additional birds, and it was seen and photographed by numerous persons for several months. With acceptance of the photos, and with due consideration of provenance (as older reports were likely of escaped individuals), the NCBRC unanimously approved (9-0) the record as representing wild birds. This first state record places the species onto the Definitive List.

American Flamingos, 2 September 2023, Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge, Dare County, NC. Photograph by Karen Lebing.

Fork-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus savana*) (23-09). The NCBRC unanimously accepted (9-0) a photo report by Daniel Irons of one seen at Run Hill State Natural Area in *Dare* County on 26 September 2023. This is the sixth state record, with four being along the coast.

Elegant Tern (*Thalasseus elegans*) (23-11). An individual was photographed in a mixed flock of Royal (*T. maximus*) and Sandwich (*T. sandvicensis*) Terns at the north end of Pea Island refuge in *Dare* County on 14 Sep 2023. Daniel Irons provided several photos of the bird on the ground and in flight, and the NCBRC unanimously accepted (9-0) the report. This is the first state record, and acceptance of photos places the species onto the Definitive List.

Yellow-rumped Warbler (Audubon's) (*Setophaga coronata auduboni*) (23-12). Though there are numerous records of this subspecies from the Coastal Plain and Piedmont, this is the first report accepted (9-0) for the Mountains region. This individual was present at the UNC-Asheville campus near Asheville in *Buncombe* County in January and February 2023.

Western Flycatcher (*Empidonax difficilis*) (23-13). One bird, initially found and photographed by Ann Stinely at Buckhorn Reservoir in *Wilson* County on 26 November 2022, lingered there for several weeks and was seen, heard, and photographed by many people. The NCBRC unanimously accepted (9-0) the report, becoming the third state record for the species, which had been split into the confusingly similar Pacific-slope Flycatcher (*E. difficilis*) and the Cordilleran Flycatcher (*E. occidentalis*) from 1989 to 2023. This is the first state record for the Coastal Plain. The species is already on the Definitive List.

Heermann's Gull (23-14). An adult photographed by Trevor Sleight and others at Long Beach in *Brunswick* County on 25 Feb 2023 was unanimously accepted (9-0). As mentioned above, it is difficult to know if this is the same adult that is responsible for one or more other state records, but this is technically the third accepted state record.

Heermann's Gull (23-15). "Another" adult was seen in the Nags Head area of *Dare* County from 12-23 May 2023 and photographed by several observers. The vote was to unanimously approve (9-0), for a "fourth" state accepted record.

Black Guillemot (*Cepphus grylle*) (23-16). One was photographed at a pier in Wrightsville Beach, *New Hanover* County, from 17-19 December 2022. The NCBRC accepted photos from Michelle Forte, Bob Lewis, and several others, and the verdict was a unanimous one (9-0). This is the fifth accepted state record.

Townsend's Warbler (*Setophaga townsendi*) (23-17). One was photographed by Daniel Irons at Run Hill in *Dare* County on 16 September 2023. This unanimously accepted (9-0) report is one of about nine or ten state records.

Broad-tailed Hummingbird (*Selasphorus platycercus*) (23-18). An immature female was photographed (by Martina Nordstrand and others) and banded (by Dwayne Martin) at a feeder in northwestern *Union* County from 25 November – 7 December 2023. The report was unanimously accepted (9-0) and is the second state record, both for the Piedmont. The species is already on the Definitive List.

Gray Flycatcher (*Empidonax wrightii*) (23-19). One was studied closely, and photographed, by Martin Wall and John Fussell at Cape Lookout, *Carteret* County, on 8 October 2023. Often difficult to identify in the East, the written material and photos were sufficient for the NCBRC, which unanimously accepted (9-0) the report. This is the second state record, with the first from the Piedmont in winter; the species is already on the Definitive List.

Harris's Sparrow (*Zonotrichia querula*) (23-21). One first seen near Swannanoa, *Buncombe* County, on 21 December 2023 by Carly Flannery was later photographed by numerous birders over several months. The NCBRC unanimously accepted (9-0) the report, the third from the Mountains region and about the 11th state record.

Harris's Sparrow,
1 January 2024,
Warren Wilson College,
Buncombe County, NC.
Photograph by Ian McDonald.

Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) (23-22). An immature found by Harry LeGrand and Jeff Blalock at Lake Crabtree in *Wake* County on 5 November 2023 was accepted unanimously (9-0). It was photographed by several observers that day, and it becomes the fifth inland record, all but one from the Piedmont.

Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) (23-24). An adult photographed by Chip Davis on 31 October 2023 at Lake Crabtree, *Wake* County, was unanimously accepted (9-0). This is approximately the eighth Piedmont record, and it is surprisingly late as well.

Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*) (23-25). One was photographed on 22 November 2023 at Lake Lure, *Rutherford* County, by Mike Resch. The NCBRC unanimously accepted (9-0) the photos and also the descriptions by Vicky Burke and by Resch. This is the sixth Piedmont record – none yet for the large and heavily birded Falls Lake, Jordan Lake, or Lake Norman!

Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*) (23-26). Jeremy Wrenn photographed one south of Raleigh, *Wake* County, on 12 November 2023. The NCBRC unanimously accepted (9-0) the record. There are about three previous photo records for the Piedmont.

Ash-throated Flycatcher (23-27). Another unanimous vote (9-0) was for an individual of this species photographed by Tom Baker on 24 November 2023, at the Guilford County Farm in that county. Others photographed it through 27 November.

Ash-throated Flycatcher (23-28). Another Piedmont individual was photographed by numerous observers at Chantilly Ecological Sanctuary in *Mecklenburg* County on 13 November 2023. This report also received a unanimous verdict (9-0).

Tropical Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) (23-29). One was seen, recorded calling, and photographed at Mackay Island National Wildlife Refuge, *Currituck* County, by Tracy Tate on 13 October 2023. It was seen and photographed by many observers until 6 November. The NCBRC unanimously accepted (9-0) this record, which is apparently the first with voice recordings. This represents the sixth state record, all in the Coastal Plain.

Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*) (23-30). One photographed at Jackson Park, *Henderson* County, on 19 September 2023 by Paul Aaron and Karen Hamblett was a first record for the Mountains region. It was accepted by a vote of 8 Accept as Valid and 1 Inadequately Documented.

Townsend's Warbler (23-31). David True photographed one at Duck Town Park in *Dare* County on 16-17 September 2023, with a unanimous verdict (9-0). Could this have been the same individual reported on 16 September at Run Hill (Record 23-17), about 10-15 miles farther south? That latter bird was seen flying northward in the morning. Assuming a different bird, this is at least the tenth state record.

Townsend's Warbler,
17 September 2023,
Duck Town Park,
Dare County, NC.
Photograph by Jeff Lewis.

Townsend's Warbler (23-32). Another unanimous verdict (9-0) was one photographed at Bodie Island, *Dare* County, on 30 September 2023, by Michael Gosselin, Jesse Haaf, and Chris Haaf. Could one Townsend's Warbler have been responsible for these three September coastal reports in Dare County? As the locales are at least 10 miles apart from each other, they are treated here as three separate records.

Not Accepted.

The following reports were judged to be inadequate for acceptance.

Lazuli Bunting (*Passerina amoena*) (23-03). Photos of an individual in *Stokes* County in May 2023 seemed to show a first-year male Indigo Bunting (*P. cyanea*), according to one reviewer. The vote was 7 Inadequately Documented and 2 Unaccepted Sighting.

Western Meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*) (23-20). A meadowlark photographed on 22 October 2023 by an unnamed person at Clingmans Dome in *Swain* County, close to the Tennessee state line, was not accepted to this species. Though the comments suggest the bird likely was a Western, the three photos did not show the head, nor was there any description of the behavior or calls. The vote of 4 Accept as Valid but 5 Inadequately Documented means that the report does not meet the criteria for outside review. This species remains on the Provisional List, with two older sight reports accepted, but still lacking specimen or photographic confirmation (or a third accepted sight report) for placement on the Definitive List.

Unresolved – Outside Review Pending

Whenever an initial report receives a majority of acceptance votes, but also receives two or more non-acceptance votes, it gets sent for outside review, whereafter a simple majority will suffice for approval.

Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii*) (23-10). A bird was briefly seen, and poorly photographed, on the *Dare* County Outer Banks in September 2023. The vote of 7 for Accept as Valid but 2 for Inadequately Documented causes this report to not be accepted but to go to outside review.

Black-legged Kittiwake (23-23). An adult reported from a lake in *Wake* County in late November 2023 was not accepted, by a vote of 7 Accept as Valid but 2 Inadequately Documented. A few reviewers were not convinced that a Bonaparte's Gull (*Chroicocephalus philadelphia*) was adequately eliminated, especially as there were no photographs to better document the report, which qualifies for outside review. There are no accepted records of an adult kittiwake in the state.

Summary

With this round of voting, White-crowned Pigeon, Plumbeous Vireo, American Flamingo, and Elegant Tern are directly added to the Definitive List. Thus, the Definitive List moves from 483 at the end of 2022 to now 487 species. The Provisional List remains at 11 species.

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

Harry LeGrand
1109 Nichols Drive
Raleigh, NC 27605
hlegrandjr@gmail.com

(All dates 1 March – 31 May 2024, unless otherwise noted)

Briefs for the Files is a seasonal collection of uncommon-to-rare or unusual North and South Carolina bird sightings and events that do not necessarily require a more detailed General Field Note or article in The Chat. The majority of these sightings are taken from eBird reports and that website. Other reports are taken from the Carolinabirds listserv, with some from various Facebook group sites, iNaturalist and several other websites, and from direct correspondence with the Briefs for the Files editor.

Winter	*December 1–February 28*	*due March 20*
Spring	*March 1–May 31*	*due June 20*
Summer	*June 1–July 31*	*due August 20*
Fall	*August 1–November 30*	*due December 20*

Nearly all of the eBird reports have been accepted/vetted by regional reviewers in the Carolinas. Other reports included here have been considered valid by the Briefs editor, as long as a written description and/or photographs accompanied the reports. However, a few of the records included in these Briefs should be further reviewed by state bird records committees for ultimate acceptance.

Reports of very rare birds might warrant a General Field Note in this journal. You can submit your Field Note directly to the Chat editor without going through me.

Abbreviations: **BRC** = Bird Records Committee; **et al.** = and others; **m. obs**. = multiple observers; **NC** = North Carolina; **NP** = National Park; **NWR** = National Wildlife Refuge; **SC =** South Carolina; **SP** = State Park; **WMA** = Wildlife Management Area.

All place names in italics are counties.

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck: Rare well inland were three seen by James Jones in *Randolph* NC on 29 Apr, two seen by Kevin Kubach in *Pickens* SC on 20 May, and 12 seen in flight by Stephanie Braswell in *Newberry* SC on 27 Apr. Records of this species continue to explode, with at least a dozen or more sites for it reported just in NC, where only ten years ago it was a review species.

Snow Goose: A locally high number was 1,000 photographed by Greg Hudson at Tanglewood Lake *Pasquotank* NC on 15 Mar. One photographed by John Becker along Goat Island Road *Clarendon* SC was very late on 17 May.

Ross's Goose: Notable outside the usual wintering grounds in eastern NC were single birds seen on 20 Mar at Carolina Beach SP *New Hanover* NC by Jesse Anderson and Heather Fuller, seen by David Walters in *Guilford* NC on 10 Mar, and photographed by David Clark at Tanglewood Lake *Pasquotank* on 11 Mar.

Greater White-fronted Goose: Oddly, both spring records were from SC, and both were surprisingly late (in May). Jackie Brooks and others photographed one in *Charleston* on 5 May, and Jason Corder photographed one on Lake Hartwell at Westminster *Oconee* on 21 May.

Brant: One was late in departing, as photographed by Karen Lebing at Waves *Dare* NC on 28 May.

Cackling Goose: One seen at Mayo River SP *Rockingham* NC in Feb remained until 11 Mar (m. obs.). Another was seen near Woodley *Tyrrell* NC on 8 Mar (Jesse Haaf); the species probably winters in this area, moving with large groups of Canada Geese among several borrow ponds along US 64.

Mute Swan: In NC, there were so many records scattered across the entire state that it is impossible to sort out which ones should be considered as "non-feral", if any. Most people consider the species only countable along the Outer Banks, and even there the birds are perhaps not truly migrating in from farther north. There used to be a sizable breeding population on the Delmarva Peninsula, but wildlife officials have eliminated most of these birds owing to marsh vegetation damage by a non-native species.

Eurasian Wigeon: The only report for the spring season was a likely first record for *Jones* NC, where Trevor Sleight saw a male on Catfish Lake on 3 Mar.

American Black Duck: In the mountains of NC, where generally rare, birds were reported in early spring from *Avery, Watauga, Haywood, Henderson, Transylvania*, and *Macon*.

Mottled Duck: Though it is locally common year-round along much of the SC coast, it is still quite rare in NC. The only report accepted by eBird reviewers in this latter state was two photographed at Fort Fisher State Recreation Area *New Hanover* on 20 May by Lee Justice and Ryan Justice.

Northern Pintail: Generally rare in the mountains, a count of nine at Ecusta Pond *Transylvania* NC on 22 Mar by Roan Hannan was notable.

Redhead: Very late in departing, possibly injured birds, were singles seen at the Davis Impoundment *Carteret* NC on 26 May (Martin Wall et al.) and at Cape Hatteras point *Dare* NC, also on that day (m. obs.).

Greater Scaup: A male photographed at Black Mountain *Buncombe* NC on 18 May by Mathew Sumner was very late for the state. There seemed to be many more inland reports in both states than usual this spring, though some may be misidentified Lesser Scaups, the more numerous scaup species in most areas.

Common Eider: Wintering individuals lingered at both the Duck and Jennette's piers in *Dare*. One remained at the first site until 15 May (Jeremy Braun) and another at the latter site until 21 May (Ken Blankenship, Patrick Maurice). Individuals lingered along the SC coast to 21 Mar at Folly Beach *Charleston* (Evan Schuman) and at Edisto Island in that county on 27 Mar (Happy Chambers). A few of these eiders do linger well into summer along the NC coast.

Harlequin Duck: The only spring report was of the wintering group at the Duck Pier, where Jeremy Braun saw four during most of Mar, with the last seen on 29 Mar.

Surf Scoter: An adult male photographed in Columbia *Richland* SC on 11 Apr by Sharon Watson might have been the same one as photographed at nearby Lake Murray *Lexington* on 15 Apr by Jim Browning; the species is notable for that region. The only other far inland spring report was one to two seen from Riverbend Park *Catawba* NC from 10-22 Mar (Dwayne Martin et al.).

White-winged Scoter: A group of up to seven were present at Ocean Isle Beach *Brunswick* NC from 5-30 Mar, as noted by David Wilson et al. The species is rather rare that far south and for staying such a long time.

Long-tailed Duck: Quite noteworthy far inland was a female photographed at Morganton *Burke* NC on 3 Mar by Thomas and Tamara Sanders. Another was locally unusual at Edenton *Chowan* NC, as photographed by Jerry Messinger et al. on 17 Mar.

Common Goldeneye: The only spring report was a continuing bird photographed at Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC on 1-3 Mar by Derek Hudgins, Ryan Justice, and Lee Justice.

Common Merganser: A count of 20 females at a small pond near Creswell *Washington* NC, as photographed on 14 Mar by Pat Draisey and Peggy Eubank, must have been part of the large group that winters at nearby Phelps Lake. The numerous spring records from the NC mountains surely represent breeding or potentially breeding birds, a remarkable natural "success story" in the face of global warming and increased recreational pressure (such as canoeing and rafting) on the rivers where the birds are nesting.

Red-breasted Merganser: This merganser is also increasing in the Carolinas, at least in terms of overwintering and migrating individuals, almost all females, on inland lakes. Flocks of many dozens are now almost the norm at some of the larger lakes, at least for brief periods in Mar.

Ruffed Grouse: A female with five chicks seen at Green River Game Land (Walcott Tract) *Polk* NC was notable at that foothills site, as reported by Simon Thompson and Michael Berkoben on 26 May.

Ring-necked Pheasant: Though there were a few spring reports well inland, where not established, one photographed at Cape Lookout *Carteret* NC on 21 Apr by Matt Spangler was "countable". His eBird report stated that "The long-established colony is apparently increasing naturally, according to Park Service staff." Note, however, that the former population on Hatteras Island is apparently extirpated, and that on Ocracoke Island is close to extirpation; a few birds can still be found on Core Banks islands.

American Flamingo: One seen on an island in Winyah Bay *Georgetown* SC on 5 May by Matt Rivers and Gus Messinides might well have been the same one as seen in the winter at nearby Cape Romain NWR *Charleston*. The species was first reported from the Carolinas in fall 2023, but none lingered in NC into the winter.

Eurasian Collared-Dove: Most unusual for the northern mountains was one carefully seen by Steve Dowlan and Max Ramey along Jakes Mountain Road *Watauga* on 31 Mar. There were many other NC records from the central and southern mountains and scattered at a few sites in that state's north-central Coastal Plain, areas where this exotic species has been absent to scarce in recent years.

Common Ground Dove: Very rare in NC was one photographed by John Rice-Cameron and others at Pee Dee NWR *Richmond* on 4-6 May. Nearly as rare was one seen near McBee *Chesterfield* SC on 25 May by Steve Patterson, and one photographed in that state in *Lexington* on 28 Apr by Cynthia and Butch Damon.

White-winged Dove: This "stray" was reported quite a few times along and near the NC coast, from north to south: Waves *Dare* on 17-19 May (Karen and Gerry Lebing), Frisco *Dare* on 29 May (Wade Baker et al.), Hobucken *Pamlico* on 8 May (Christine Stoughton Root), Fort Macon SP *Carteret* on 31 May (Clyde Sorenson), and Carolina Beach SP *New Hanover* on 5 May (Liling Warren). Reports in SC were also coastal: singles at North Myrtle Beach *Horry* on 28-29 May (Deb Winter), Fort Moultrie National Monument *Charleston* on 20 May (Craig Watson et al.), and Hunting Island SP *Beaufort* on 20-22 Apr (Rich Jackson et al.).

Black-billed Cuckoo: There were numerous spring reports for NC, with one photographed near the southern coast by Sam Cooper and Jacob Annis near Castle Hayne *New Hanover* on 14 Apr being early and quite rare. However, the only SC record was one heard calling by Chris Sermons in *Laurens* on 1 May.

Chuck-will's-widow: One recorded calling several miles northeast of Swiss *Yancey* NC on 12 May (B&B Miller) was at a high elevation and a rare find for the northern portion of the state's mountains.

Black-chinned Hummingbird: One of the few NC records of a photographed immature male was made by Gilbert Grant at a feeder in Sneads Ferry *Onslow* on 25 Apr.

Rufous Hummingbird: The long-recurring bird at Riverbend Park *Catawba* NC was last noted on 28 Mar (Dwayne Martin), and the wintering bird in *Orange* NC was last

noted on 29 Mar (Scott Brandes). An adult male in *Charleston* SC was last noted on 7 Mar (Allison Smith, Christian Feldt).

King Rail: The breeding status of this species well inland in both states is poorly known. The species continues to be seen and heard at Lake Surf *Moore* NC, where Chuck Gehringer and John Bird photographed and heard three birds on 4 May. As many as two were noted at Fants Grove WMA *Anderson* SC from 11-15 May by Kevin Kubach and Andy Norris – suggestive of potential breeding there. Near the Fall Line, but still notable, were two heard and photographed at Society Hill *Chesterfield* SC on 15 Mar, by Graham Norman.

Virginia Rail: Once again this spring, The Park at Flat Rock *Henderson* NC hosted the species, where it likely is nesting. However, no more than one was seen or heard on many dates from 28 Apr – 6 May (m. obs.). There were four Piedmont NC reports and one in Piedmont SC this spring, which seems about normal.

Common Gallinule: Quite rare in the mountains was one photographed by Bird Smith along the Little Tennessee River Greenway *Macon* NC on 15 May. The species seldom nests in NC into the western Coastal Plain, but it does nest at a number of places in SC close to the Fall Line, such as the Augusta, GA, area, Boykins Mill Pond *Kershaw*, Lake Ashwood *Lee*, and Lake Wallace *Marlboro*, each of which hosted gallinules this spring.

Purple Gallinule: One grazing on a lawn(!) was photographed by James Allen at Bogue Inlet *Carteret* NC on 9 May.

Limpkin: None were seen in NC this spring, but a handful were reported on eBird in SC, where local breeding has taken place. The farthest inland report was in the upper half of Lake Marion *Calhoun* – two photographed by Cathy Mathias on 5 Mar.

Sandhill Crane: This seemingly increasing species was reported from at least a dozen sites in NC and about five in SC. The most intriguing was the "return" of one to a site of previous nesting at Boiling Spring Lakes *Brunswick* NC, as reported by Will Gibson on 20 Apr.

Black-necked Stilt: Very rare well inland in NC were two photographed by Patty Masten, Anita Hooker, and Bill Hooker at Goldsboro *Wayne* on 25 Apr.

American Avocet: Excellent SC counts were 36 seen by Garrett Rhyne at Santee Coastal Reserve *Charleston* on 30 Mar, and 36 also seen by Jim Browning at Bear Island WMA *Colleton* on 5 Apr.

Black-bellied Plover: Notable in the NC Piedmont province in spring, single birds were good finds at Lake Brandt *Guilford* from 1-6 May (Andrew Thornton et al.) and at Lake Crabtree *Wake* on 5 May (Chip Davis et al.).

American Golden-Plover: One photographed by Daniel Irons at Alligator River NWR *Dare* on 10 Mar was very rare near the coast at that season. Irons also saw one at Pea

Island NWR on 30 Apr, and one was reported with Black-bellied Plovers at Tubbs Inlet *Brunswick* on 29 Mar by Lindsay Addison and Kristen Johnson. Sadly, no others were reported farther inland in NC this spring; a few typically are reported in the southern mountains. SC had two reports, both from the Townville area Anderson –singles on 31 Mar (Andy Norris) and on 8 May (Steve Patterson).

Pacific Golden-Plover: Not only was the previous species seen at that refuge on 10 Mar, but this extreme rarity was photographed at Alligator River NWR on 10 Mar by Andrew Thornton, Daniel Irons, et al. Note that there was a very large flock of overwintering Black-bellied Plovers at the refuge, estimated at 300 individuals on this date; certainly, one or both of these golden-plovers could have been overlooked during the winter, and in fact this latter species was photographed there from 11-14 Jan and thus must have been the same individual.

Wilson's Plover: Seldom seen along the NC coast north of Cape Hatteras point, one was found at North Pond at Pea Island NWR on 5 May by Ryan Justice and Lee Justice. The species does breed locally on the coast of Virginia, but it is essentially absent as a breeder between Cape Hatteras and the Chesapeake Bay.

Upland Sandpiper: Populations of this species continue to dwindle, as spring reports are becoming even more scarce than normal. The only one for NC was a bird at Hooper Lane *Henderson*, as seen by Tim Novak and others on 5-6 May. The only reports for SC were singles seen north of Cowpens *Spartanburg* on 21-22 Apr by Michael Robertson and others, and at Anderson Regional Airport in that county on 22-23 Apr by Steve Patterson and Lee Weber. One was seen but not described from Savannah NWR in that state.

Bar-tailed Godwit: Presumably the long-returning bird seen in early winter was reported again in spring at eastern Shackleford Banks *Carteret* NC – on 14 Apr by Trevor Sleight and David Cooper.

Hudsonian Godwit: Seldom seen in spring, one in breeding plumage was found by Steve Shultz and photographed by Kevin Markham at Fort Fisher *New Hanover* NC on 19 May.

Ruddy Turnstone: A group of nine was an excellent semi-inland count, as photographed by Trevor Sleight at Belhaven *Beaufort* NC on 24 May.

Stilt Sandpiper: The best tally in eastern NC was four found by Sam Cooper along Spring Creek Road *Beaufort* on 7 May. Inland in that state, a few birds were found at Lake Brandt *Guilford*, at Hooper Lane *Henderson*, and in *Transylvania*. SC had a number of coastal reports, with the best documented tally being 22 at Nemours Wildlife Foundation *Beaufort* on 25 Apr (Steven Guy, Jonathan Watkins, Beau Bauer). The only far inland record in that state was two photographed by Steve Patterson at Townville *Anderson* on 16 May.

Sanderling: A general scarcity of unsettled weather this spring meant that most coastal shorebirds passed over inland portions of the Carolinas to their breeding grounds without being forced down. However, Michael Plauche and Nathaniel Axtell photographed one near Brevard *Transylvania* on 9 May.

Dunlin: As mentioned above, the spring weather was poor for notable inland shorebirding. In inland NC the only reports came from Lake Norman *Mecklenburg* and at Hooper Lane *Henderson*, and SC's only such report was at Townville *Anderson*.

Purple Sandpiper: Somewhat late in departing was one seen at Fort Macon SP *Carteret* NC on 13 May by Martin Wall, at Fort Moultrie *Charleston* on 20 Apr by Kathy Hart, and at Tomkins Island *Jasper* SC on 15 Apr by Marie Chappell and others.

Baird's Sandpiper: Very rare in spring, and somewhat early as well, was one photographed by Steve Patterson at Townville SC on 17 Apr. Most of the few Carolina records in spring are in May.

White-rumped Sandpiper: There were only a few inland spring records – up to four at Lake Brandt *Guilford* from 5-23 May (Elizabeth Link, Matt Wangarin, m. obs.); up to three at Hooper Lane *Henderson* from 6-27 May (Mike Resch, m. obs.); one in *Spartanburg* SC on 19 May (David Gravermoen); one to two at Lamaster Dairy Center *Pickens* SC from 17-24 May (Kevin Kubach et al.); and one at Horse Creek Water Treatment Plant *Aiken* SC from 26-28 May (Matt Malin et al.).

Western Sandpiper: This is a very rare species inland in spring, generally flying directly over this region from the coast to its breeding grounds in Alaska and western Canada. A single far inland report of two birds in NC, though with a photo of one, lacks enough detail and no description on the eBird report.

Short-billed Dowitcher: Despite mostly full reservoirs and little disturbed weather this spring, there was a remarkable fallout of this species into the NC mountains, on a single May date! An astounding tally of 43 birds was made at Mountain Range Driving Range *Transylvania* on 9 May by Michael Plauche and Nathaniel Axtell. Also on that day were up to 14 seen nearby at Hooper Lane *Henderson* by Galen Goodrum et al., 19 counted at the Biltmore Estate *Buncombe* by Jay Wherley and Clifton Avery, and one seen at Lake Junaluska *Haywood* by Vincent Kloster and Jeffrey Gresko. In the southwestern Piedmont, another was photographed, also on 9 May, at Rankin Lake *Gaston* NC by Kevin Clary.

Long-billed Dowitcher: An excellent Carolina tally was 200 made by Steven Guy, Beau Bauer, and Jonathan Watkins at Nemours Wildlife Foundation *Beaufort* SC on 25 Apr.

Willet: The only far inland report for the spring was one photographed by Matt Wangarin at Lake Brandt *Guilford* on 10 May.

Wilson's Phalarope: Sadly, there were no coastal reports this spring. The only regional report was far inland at Biltmore Estate *Buncombe* on 9 May, when Kirstin Shrode

photographed three, one a breeding plumaged female, in flight. Interestingly, these birds were not detected by the numerous other birders who visited the locale earlier in the day to see the Short-billed Dowitchers!

Red-necked Phalarope: The species was seen on many of the Gulf Stream pelagic trips out of Hatteras *Dare* (fide Brian Patteson), with a peak tally of 118 on 18 May. Daniel Irons tallied 221 from shore at Cape Hatteras point on 2 May. Along the SC coast one was notable at a pond at Huntington Beach SP, as photographed on 14 May by Lily and Addy Knepp.

Red Phalarope: Few pelagic trips are taken south of Cape Hatteras; thankfully, Caleb Bronsink found 100 individuals from 10-50 miles off Beaufort Inlet *Carteret* on 14 Mar. The species was found on several other offshore trips in NC waters in Mar and Apr, though nearly all had departed northward by early May, as just one was noted off Hatteras on 10 May (Brian Patteson party).

South Polar Skua: The northbound flight in late May just off the NC coast was poor or late this spring, as Brian Patteson et al. found just a single bird, on 18 May off Hatteras.

Pomarine Jaeger: The peak offshore tally off Hatteras village was four, as noted on 22 May by Kate Sutherland et al. Few were also seen from shore at Cape Hatteras point this spring, with a peak of just two, on 21 May (Daniel Irons).

Parasitic Jaeger: Martin Wall had an excellent count from shore of 21-23 birds on 11 Apr at the Atlantic Beach pier *Carteret* NC.

Long-tailed Jaeger: Seldom does a late spring season go by without an offshore sighting of this scarce migrant; however, nary a one was reported on the many pelagic trips out of Hatteras (and elsewhere) this season.

Dovekie: Off *Carteret*, Martin Wall photographed one on 16 Mar on a boat trip, and Caleb Bronsink photographed three birds on 14 Mar from 10-50 miles off Beaufort Inlet. Daniel Irons' peak "from shore" tally at Cape Hatteras was 26 on 10 Mar. The 1 Mar Patteson pelagic trip out of Oregon Inlet *Dare* tallied 70 birds.

Common Murre: One was a good sighting from shore at Cape Hatteras point on 9 Mar, as reported by Daniel Irons and Andrew Thornton.

Razorbill: The Oregon Inlet pelagic trip on 1 Mar tallied 640 birds, as reported by Brian Patteson et al. Large numbers were seen from Jennette's Pier *Dare* in early spring, and Andrew Thornton had a notable tally of 280 on 5 Mar. Even larger tallies were made by Daniel Irons from Cape Hatteras point, with an outstanding 6,355 birds on 5 Mar and 5,096 more on 10 Mar.

Atlantic Puffin: Daniel Irons tallied a few from shore at Cape Hatteras in Mar, with a best count on seven on 6 Mar. The Oregon Inlet pelagic trip on 1 Mar tallied eight birds (Seabirding Inc.).

Black-headed Gull: Seldom reported in inland SC, a winter-plumaged adult was seen and photographed by Jerry Griggs from 4-9 Mar at a wastewater treatment facility in *Lexington*. Slightly inland in NC was one photographed by Pat Draisey and Lee Adams at Point Peter Road on mainland *Dare* on 17 Mar.

Little Gull: Single birds were seen in coastal NC off Oregon Inlet on 1 Mar (Brian Patteson party), at Jennette's Pier *Dare* on 4 Mar (Andrew Thornton), and at Cape Hatteras point on 12 Mar and 27 Apr (both by Daniel Irons).

Laughing Gull: Oddly, the only far inland report in NC was one seen by Spike Millington at Jordan Lake *Chatham* on 12 Apr. In the *Saluda* SC area, up to ten were seen on 7 Apr by Allison Cahill.

Iceland Gull: One was photographed at Atlantic Beach *Carteret* on 26 Mar by Martin Wall, another remained at Cape Hatteras point from 4 Mar – 11 May (Daniel Irons et al.), another (or the same from Cape Hatteras point?) was at Hatteras village point on 20 Apr (Irons), and most unusual was one photographed at the Alligator River bridge *Tyrrell* by John Hale on 18 May, quite a late record. Presumably this last bird was seen again there on 31 May by Sarah Toner and Larry Chen.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: This greatly increasing species was noted this spring west only as far as Lake Townsend *Guilford*, where three continuing birds were photographed by Matt Wangerin on 2 Mar. The best spring total in the Piedmont was 230 counted by Ron Martin at Jordan Lake on 11 Mar. Another good well-inland count was 383 made by Trevor Sleight at Bethel *Pitt* on 9 Mar.

Glaucous Gull: This scarce visitor was reported along the NC coast on five occasions, two in *Carteret* and three in *Dare*. Most notable was an adult "bridge bird" seen along the US 64 bridge over Croatan Sound *Dare* from 22 Apr - 4 May (Andrew Thornton et al.). Obtaining a photo, on a long and busy bridge, is always difficult, but David True did manage such documentation on 28 Apr!

Sooty Tern: This species does not usually show up in Carolina waters until midsummer; thus, early was one seen by Caleb Bronsink on a boat trip between 10-50 miles out from Beaufort Inlet *Carteret* on 26 May.

Bridled Tern: One was slightly early as seen off Hatteras Inlet on 19 May by Brian Patteson et al., and singles were seen on other pelagic trips there on 24 May and 28 May by these observers. One photographed on a pelagic trip about 75 miles ESE of Charleston harbor on 7 Apr by Fred Hall was very early; few such trips off the SC coast are taken during the warmer months.

Least Tern: This species continues its intriguing occurrence in central and eastern *Pitt* NC, where nesting is apparently not known. This spring birds were seen often starting on 20 Apr, with a peak of 11 on 20 Apr (Joe and Stacy Weiss) at one site and five on several dates through the end of May (Caleb Bronsink, m. obs.) at another. In SC, Lake Wallace *Marlboro* hosted up to three birds from 21 Apr – 29 May (Kyle Jones, Tii McLane et al.).

A few were also present nearby in Apr - May at Goodale SP *Kershaw*, Camden Riverfront Environmental Park *Kershaw*, and Bishopville *Lee*.

Caspian Tern: This species made a good showing at several dozen inland sites in the Carolinas on its way north and northwest to its breeding grounds. The best of several mountain records, where scarce, was of four noted at Ecusta Pond *Transylvania* on 14 May by Nathaniel Axtell et al.

Black Tern: This declining species, on the other hand, was absent this spring at inland sites, and the highest one-day count along the NC coast was just three. On the other hand, Mike Winck photographed 12 on 16 May at the Santee Coastal Reserve *Charleston* SC.

Roseate Tern: Though there were no records for SC this spring, coastal NC had several, with the best being four at the Salt Pond at Cape Hatteras point on 28 Apr (Jeff Lewis, Michael Moss), a very high tally for that month.

Common Tern: There were only two spring reports inland, both for NC; neither had photos or detailed descriptions, though both might have been correct. Confusion with Forster's Terns is easy, especially when not seen at close range (and most terns on large lakes are not seen at close range).

Arctic Tern: Always exciting onshore, one was photographed on 20 May by Alan MacEachren at the Salt Pond at Cape Hatteras point. On pelagic trips out of Hatteras into the Gulf Stream, Brian Patteson and party photographed two on 22 May and singles on 23 May, 27 May, and 30 May.

Forster's Tern: Inland records were very numerous and often well documented. Two photographed in *Clay* NC on 17 Apr (Ventures Birding) might be a first for that poorly-birded county.

Red-billed Tropicbird: The only spring report of a tropicbird was an adult, perhaps the same one that has visited Cape Hatteras point on scattered occasions in recent years, seen by Daniel Irons at that site on 23 Apr.

Red-throated Loon: Quite rare inland in spring were singles photographed at Lake Hickory *Caldwell* from 17-19 Mar by Dwayne Martin et al. and seen at the Russell Dam overlook *Abbeville* SC on 8 Mar by Matthew Campbell.

Pacific Loon: One was photographed on Lake Murray *Lexington* SC on 23-24 Mar by Graham Norman, John Tjaarda, and Zach Steinhauser et al. One seen at Hatteras point on 16 Apr by Daniel Irons was very rare for *Dare*, whereas the small wintering population in coastal *New Hanover* was reported a few times.

Wilson's Storm-Petrel: There were no SC reports this spring, and no unusual ones for the NC coast. The best offshore count was of 218 off Hatteras on 31 May (Seabirding Inc.).

Leach's Storm-Petrel: Though recorded on most of Brian Patteson's offshore trips in May out of Hatteras this spring, the highest one-day count was six on 18 May.

Band-rumped Storm-Petrel: This species continued to be routine on Brian Patteson's late spring trips out of Hatteras Inlet, with several peak counts of ten. Sadly, they were unable to encounter the rare but regular European Storm-Petrel on the many May trips.

Trindade Petrel: Single dark morph individuals of this rarity were seen on Brian Patteson's trips to the Gulf Stream off Cape Hatteras on 19 May, 23 May, and 24 May.

Bermuda Petrel: Even rarer than the Trindade and Fea's petrels, Patteson and group photographed one on 18 May in the Gulf Stream off Cape Hatteras.

Black-capped Petrel: Two were noted (with a photo of one) about 75 miles ESE of Charleston harbor SC on 7 Apr by Fred Hall. Though expected to occur in the Gulf Stream off that state, reports are rather few owing to the distance involved to reach this warm water zone. Two were noted on 1 Mar on a pelagic trip off Oregon Inlet by Brian Patteson and party.

Fea's Petrel: On pelagic trips out of Hatteras Inlet this spring, Brian Patteson and company saw two on 24 May, one on 25 May, and one on 30 May.

Cory's Shearwater: The only spring report from shore was of three seen by Daniel Irons from Cape Hatteras point on 14 May.

Sooty Shearwater: There were no reports of sizable numbers (five or more) from anywhere along or off the coast this spring, perhaps owing to a scarcity of strong E winds.

Manx Shearwater: Daniel Irons had a good onshore tally of 15, seen from Cape Hatteras point on 22 Mar.

Wood Stork: Two soaring over Lake Orange in that county on 20 Apr, as noted by Brian Bockhahn, were very unusual that early in the year. Another seen in flight by Simon Harvey on 18 Apr in *Greenville* SC was also far inland for this spring season.

Magnificent Frigatebird: This species is annual along the coast in the summer and fall, though in very small numbers. Quite early was one photographed over Pea Island NWR on 12 Apr (Peggy Eubank, Annette Sheets). That must have been one of the two birds seen that day by Kate Sutherland and by Daniel Irons at two sites in Hatteras village. Monroe Pannell saw one, apparently an adult male, at Cape Hatteras point on 4 May. The only SC reports for the season were singles seen by Nick Taylor at Folly Beach *Charleston* on 10 May and by Chris Albert at Kiawah Island on 15 May.

Masked Booby: Always a good find, an immature was photographed by Kate Sutherland and others on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras Inlet on 24 May.

Brown Booby: Formerly rarer than the previous booby in NC waters, this species is now more frequently observed; Daniel Irons even saw an adult from shore at Cape Hatteras point on 11 Apr. Offshore, Brian Patteson et al. observed singles off Hatteras Inlet on 25 May, 27 May, 30 May, and 31 May. Another was photographed by Jeff Skevington from a cruise ship several dozen miles ESE of Cape Hatteras point on 13 Apr.

Anhinga: Far inland reports of this species keep increasing, and there were reports from at least 10-12 NC Piedmont counties, where Anhingas are likely beginning to breed in several of them. Most unusual, at the base of the mountains, was an immature seen at a pond in Saluda *Polk* NC on 16 May, as seen by Kevin Burke. One in far western SC at Conestee Nature Preserve *Greenville* SC, as noted by Michael Lashley on 25 Apr, was nearly as unusual.

Great Cormorant: An adult photographed on a dock at Lake Waccamaw *Columbus* NC by Rosemary Dorsey on 25 May was not only very rare inland but was quite late – for an adult bird no less! Reports from the NC coast were somewhat more widespread than usual this spring, though wintering numbers still remain lower than usual in recent years.

American White Pelican: Notable numbers for the mountains was a flock at Ecusta Pond *Transylvania* on 6 May, found by Michael Plauche and later by others; the highest count was 19 birds. Interestingly, late on the previous day (5 May), Nick Accardo photographed 18 birds overhead in Brevard! I suspect that these birds put down at Ecusta Pond overnight, but we likely will never know! The species was observed at four or five Piedmont/Fall Line sites in each of the two states, as well as commonly in the lower Coastal Plain areas near wintering sites.

American Bittern: Seemingly a declining species in our region, but the number of reports across the Carolinas this spring suggests that perhaps numbers are rebounding slightly. There were 15 or more inland reports just for NC and nearly as many for inland SC. A few reports toward the coast, at least in NC, might be suggestive of local breeding. Reports in Jun will be important to "flesh out" such possibilities.

Least Bittern: A number of reports from Lake Surf *Moore* in Apr and May strongly suggest local breeding there again (John Bird et al.). Rare montane records were singles seen by Guy McGrane at the Boone greenway *Watauga* on 11 May and heard by Jay Wherley at Warren Wilson College *Buncombe* on 7 Apr. Another far inland report was one seen by Samuel Payne at Conestee Nature Preserve *Greenville* on 12 Apr; he and others also saw three American Bitterns and a Sora on that same day there!

Snowy Egret: An excellent spring count inland was four photographed at Pee Dee NWR *Anson* NC on 19 May, as found by Emma and Nathaniel Blackford. Far inland in SC were two seen by Steve Patterson at Townville on 8 May.

Tricolored Heron: Very rare far inland in spring, singles were good finds at Lake Betz *Wake* NC from 29 Apr – 3 May (Deborah Woody et al.) and at Lake Wallace *Marlboro* SC on 12 May (Mike Turner).

Cattle Egret: Notable in the mountains were one seen at Ecusta Pond on 4-5 Apr (Nathaniel Axtell, Bob Butler et al.) and three photographed in *Henderson* on 6 May (Galen Goodrum). There were dozens of records in the Coastal Plain up to the Fall Line across SC and northward to *Cumberland* NC; the species breeds at local sites over parts of this region.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: The species was reported from five far inland sites in NC this spring, including one in the mountains at Lake Junaluska *Haywood* on 10 Apr, as reported by Vincent Kloster.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: Breeding was documented at Sandy Creek Park in Durham city this spring, with adults on a nest (Marcia Mandel et al.), and again at Ephesus Park in Chapel Hill *Orange* with adults on three or more nests (Cathy and Mark Rodrigues et al.).

Glossy Ibis: Quite rare far inland at any time were a remarkable flock of 13 photographed at Lake Crabtree on 26 Apr by Kevin Markham; three photographed a few miles away at Lake Betz on that same day by Sujata Roy; and two found by Alysia Richard from 3-4 May at Raleigh. All of these reports came from *Wake*.

White-faced Ibis: One of the few records for SC was one photographed by Patrick Coy on 5 Mar at Santee Coastal Reserve *Charleston*; it was seen and photographed by others through 8 Mar. This is a Full Review species in that state and thus is expected to be reviewed by the SC BRC.

Roseate Spoonbill: There were numerous SC coastal records for this increasing species, with the farthest north being one seen at Huntington Beach SP *Georgetown* on 23 May by Steve Hooks. However, none were reported from NC this spring.

Swallow-tailed Kite: This species is clearly increasing in the region in recent years, with more inland sightings and presumably a few new nesting locales in both states. A pair is presumably nesting quite far north near Jamesville *Martin* NC, as Andrew Thornton and many others routinely saw birds there all spring. In addition to numerous records near the coast in both states, there were several sightings in the Durham/Chapel Hill/Jordan Lake region of NC, and a surprising photo record of a stray on 3 May in Madison *Rockingham* NC by David Schroder. One seen in *Anderson* SC was notable on 26 Apr (David Kirk, Brian Barchus, Jennifer Randle).

Mississippi Kite: Very unusual in the northern NC mountains were two photographed by Guy McGrane at Boone *Watauga* on 4 May. One was photographed at nearby Valle Crucis on 11 May by Silas Powell. Perhaps these were the same two birds seen in the Boone area on 17 May by Will Bennett, who luckily photographed two Sandhill Cranes in flight that same morning at the same site! A circling flock of 20 birds photographed at the Biltmore Estate *Buncombe* on 3 May (Michael Plauche, Kira Henderson) appears to be the third highest NC mountain total.

Snail Kite: The fourth NC record was a female photographed by David Cooper and others near the Harkers Island visitor center *Carteret* on 13 Apr. This report is expected to be reviewed by the NC BRC.

Presumed Snail Kite,
13 April 2024,
Harkers Island Visitor Center,
Carteret County, NC.
Photograph by David Cooper.

Barn Owl: Single birds were reported at roughly 12 scattered locales in NC and 10-12 sites in SC this spring. This strongly declining species still seems to be present over most of the two states, though obviously its extensive open country habitat is decreasing, especially in the Piedmont.

Short-eared Owl: The overwintering group in *Guilford* NC was last noted (two birds) on 2 Mar by Russ Latta. Daniel Irons saw one at dusk on Roanoke Island *Dare* on 12 Mar. Most unusual was one seen and photographed in flight in midday (!) at farm fields in *Cleveland* NC on 3 May by Patty Masten, Greg Hays, et al.

Northern Saw-whet Owl: There were gratifyingly many reports of this high-elevation species this spring, though nearly all were presumably on their nesting grounds; most of these reports were from the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Red-headed Woodpecker: One photographed at Ocracoke village *Hyde* NC on 15 Apr by Stefany Boleyn was a very rare spring visitor to the Outer Banks.

Red-cockaded Woodpecker: A few birds still hang on in far northeastern NC (though there are a few small populations in adjacent Virginia), as evidenced by Signa Williams' observing two along New Ferry Road in Chowan Swamp Game Land *Gates* on 13 Mar.

Crested Caracara: One was photographed at Moyock *Currituck* NC on 18 Mar by Shawn Henry. Several photos are posted to the Carolina Bird Club Photo Gallery. There are three previously accepted state records; thus, this report is expected to be reviewed by the NC BRC.

Ash-throated Flycatcher: One that overwintered at the Martin Marietta Park *Craven* NC was last noted on 24 Mar (Mark DiGiovanni). The other spring report was also at a Martin Marietta quarry pond – photographed on 23 Mar near Pineville *Mecklenburg* NC by Cody Little.

Western Kingbird: Always very rare in spring, single birds were photographed at Chantilly Ecological Sanctuary *Mecklenburg* on 20-21 May by Cody Little et al. and near Ash *Brunswick* NC on 16 Apr by David Wilson. At Fort Moultrie *Charleston*, one to two

birds were photographed from 2-15 Mar by Kathy Hart et al.; these may have been continuing birds from the winter.

Gray Kingbird: This sporadic coastal breeder in SC was reported from *Charleston* on 16 May (John Tjaarda) and at Savannah NWR *Jasper* from 5-8 May (Tammy Hester, Michael Oliver). A stray was photographed at Alligator River NWR on 17-18 Apr by Ann Stinely and others.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: The pair of birds that has bred near the *York* airport SC returned this spring, first noted on 24 Apr by Cindy Stacy. Elsewhere, wandering migrants were photographed in northeastern *Guilford* on 19 May (Jeffrey Greco et al.), at Buxton *Dare* on 20 Mar (George Kinney), at Fort Fisher *New Hanover* on 30 May (Ken Ashe), and at Townville SC (two birds) on 24 Apr (Brian Barchus et al.).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, 27 June 2024, York County, SC. Photograph by John Long.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: This scarce migrant slipped through SC undetected, but NC had four reports – singles noted by Alan Lenk on 25 May near Hot Springs *Madison*, by Fleeta Chauvigne on 27 May at Trout Lake *Watauga,* by John Haire on 15-16 May at Reynolda Park *Forsyth*, and by Stephen A. on 20 May at Cape Fear Shiner Park *Harnett*.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: Disappointing was the total lack of spring reports for this species, due in part to the scarcity of fronts that produce strong westerly winds at night.

Alder Flycatcher: Very rarely detected in migration east of its montane breeding sites, one was seen and recorded in *Forsyth* on 17 May by John Haire.

Willow Flycatcher: Normally more widespread in migration in the region than Alder Flycatcher, this species was detected at the Guilford County Farm from 9-19 May by Joe Donahue et al. A bird returned to an apparent breeding site in *Cabarrus* NC on 19 May, as noted by Russ Latta, and recorded on the following day by Greg Hays. A few birds also returned to a local breeding site in Winston-Salem (m. obs.). There were many NC montane records, where breeding is widespread.

Least Flycatcher: Migrants were seen and heard at Brookfield-Rocky Creek *Greenville* SC on 5 May (Tim Kalbach) and at RibbonWalk Nature Preserve *Mecklenburg* on 11 May (Ron Clark et al.). As with the previous species, there were dozens of reports for the NC mountains, where it nests locally.

Say's Phoebe: Always notable, one was seen and photographed at Whitmire *Union* SC on 2 Apr by Tracy Martin.

Philadelphia Vireo: Always rare in spring, single birds were found at Latta Park *Mecklenburg* on 2 May by Will Keller and in Columbia *Richland* on 9 May by Bob Ellis. There were, surprisingly, no reports from the NC mountains, where rare but more likely to be found than downstate.

Warbling Vireo: This species seems to be increasing in the Eastern States in recent years, as even a few years ago any reports were notable outside of the breeding grounds. On the Outer Banks, where very rare, one was seen and heard at Duck *Dare* on 12-13 May by Karen Lebing et al., and two were singing at Nags Head Woods preserve *Dare* on 27 May, as noted by Andrew Thornton. Most exciting was the discovery of one or two singing males on territory at the Cape Fear River in southeastern *Chatham*, first noted by Ron Martin on 18 Apr. Reports from the NC Piedmont were far too many to mention! The only SC report was one photographed and recorded at the Saluda Watershed *Greenville* on 22 Apr by Michael Robertson and Laura Harris.

Black-whiskered Vireo: This "tropical" vireo turns up along the coast in spring more often than one might expect, given its breeding range north only to southern Florida. In SC, one was heard singing and photographed at Fort Moultrie *Charleston* on 19-20 May by Elizabeth Anderegg, Matt Johnson, et al. In NC, where there are many more records, perhaps just a single bird was noted from the Oregon Inlet campground on 9-11 May (Jelmer Poelstra et al.), at Bodie Island on 23 May (Tom and Cathy McNeil), and finally north to the Nags Head area, spending much time at a golf course from 25-31 May (Audrey Whitlock, Andrew Thornton et al.) and into Jun.

Loggerhead Shrike: Whether there is an upturn in numbers in the last year or two is uncertain for this long-declining species; however, as this is a more Southerly species, warming temperatures might be favorable to a renewed movement northward to reclaim former breeding areas. Spring records this season in the northern NC Coastal Plain and scattered over most of the Piedmont were definitely greater than usual. These reports might mostly relate to wandering birds, and time will tell if the species is actually breeding again in counties where it used to nest. One seen in the mountains at Mills River *Henderson* on 20 Mar by Adam Duff was certainly a visitor.

Fish Crow: For better or worse, this species continues to expand into the NC mountains, and this spring there were reports for all 17 counties wholly within this province! It must certainly be nesting in some or many, though crows and ravens are quite secretive when nesting, and actual breeding evidence is sparse for Fish Crow in the mountains at the present time (confirmed only for *Watauga, Buncombe*, and *Henderson* so far – according to the NC Bird Atlas map).

Common Raven: Piedmont records continue to increase, though possibly much of this is due to increased birding effort. Reports were east to *Franklin, Wake*, and *Union*; pairs do nest at a few sites in this region. In SC, where breeding is essentially limited to the mountains, sightings in the Piedmont were southeast to *York* and *Spartanburg* only.

Black-capped Chickadee: This species breeds essentially only in Great Smoky Mountains NP, and in ranges where the Blue Ridge Parkway transects them south and east to Graveyard Fields. Reports from outside this region can be difficult to reviewers to confirm, especially if no photos or audio are provided. Good written descriptions were provided for one at Stratton Gap *Graham* on 7 May (Emilie Travis), two near Glenville *Jackson* on 16 Mar (Laura Adams), one between Webster and Dillsboro *Jackson* on 8 May (Alex Dills), and at Bakersville *Mitchell* on 21 May (John Britt).

Bank Swallow: Report of this migrant were generally fewer this spring than usual, and there were very few sizable counts; the scarcity of unsettled weather was the likely reason, allowing the swallows to migrate through the region with little stopping at local lakes and ponds.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: Oddly, for a species that barely migrated into the lower elevations this past fall and winter, there were many "downstate" reports. Most unusual was one that spent the entire spring, noted through 29 May, at Pete Rubinas' yard and feeders in *Chatham* NC.

Brown-headed Nuthatch: Though there were no reports from NC's northernmost six mountain counties this spring, it was reported at many sites there from *Buncombe* and *Madison* southwest to *Cherokee,* with the exception of *Swain* and *Graham*. However, it was reported to the base of the Blue Ridge Escarpment at Stone Mountain SP *Wilkes* and at Shortoff Mountain *Burke.*

Sedge Wren: This scarce inland migrant was detected at a dozen or more NC sites in the Piedmont and mountains, but only at one such site in SC – Bunched Arrowhead Heritage Preserve *Greenville*. This "increase" likely refers to increased birding effort, at least in NC.

Townsend's Solitaire: It must be presumed that the wayward solitaire photographed at Forty Acre Rock preserve *Lancaster* SC last Dec (Chat 88:43) overwintered in that region, as Dennis Kent and Cindy Stacy photographed one at the same site on 10 Apr. Naturally, many birders convened on the preserve, and numerous people noted it through 15 Apr. This probably still represents SC's second state record.

Gray-cheeked Thrush: Reports of migrants were mostly limited to the Piedmont and mountains, as usual. However, single birds audio-recorded by Jeff Lewis on 8 May at Southern Shores *Dare*, seen by Michael Moss on 5 May at Nags Head Woods preserve not far away, and heard singing by Robert Lethco on 6 May at Moratoc Park in Williamston *Martin* might refer to the extremely similar Bicknell's Thrush. This latter species breeds only in extreme eastern Canada and northeastern United States, wintering only in the West Indies; thus, its migration route through the Carolinas is likely limited to coastal areas and the Coastal Plain. The Gray-cheeked Thrush migrates mainly west of our region, though still is routinely found in the mountains and Piedmont, with Coastal Plain reports typically unsettled as to species.

Purple Finch: Despite the winter 2023-24 not being a "major" one for this species in the Carolinas, there were dozens of reports this spring in each state. However, none were from south of *Aiken, Williamsburg*, or *Georgetown* SC.

Red Crossbill: There were no downstate records of this irruptive species during the winter; thus, unusual were two heard calling in flight at South Mountains SP *Burke* NC on 30 May by Jack Rogers. This species was seen and heard at the Walcott Tract portion of Green River Game Land *Polk* NC this spring, four on 22 Mar (Clifton Avery, m. obs.) and especially a remarkable 13 photographed there on 28 Apr by Mark DiGiovanni. Does the species breed at this foothill location?

Pine Siskin: Despite only a moderate winter season, as with the Purple Finch, siskins were reported in spring all across the region, even to southern SC. Most notable was one still present in Pittsboro *Chatham* on 30 May, as reported by David Heavner.

Lapland Longspur: Instead of along or near the NC coast, the spring reports came from the Piedmont. Greg Hays saw one continuing at a *Union* NC locale on 2 Mar; Kade Lockhart saw one in breeding plumage near Shelby *Cleveland* NC on 21 Apr; and David Campbell saw one and heard its rattle call in *Cherokee* SC on 22 Apr, a very rare inland record for that state.

Bachman's Sparrow: All spring records in both states were, as usual, for breeding sites, as this species is seldom observed away from them. A tally of six in Sumter National Forest at the Lick Fork Lake site in *Edgefield* SC on 27 May (Matt Knepley) seems to be a notable number.

Lark Sparrow: The only SC report for the season was one photographed by Carol Boyd in *Horry* on 24 Mar; this bird has been at that yard since 24 Dec 2023. Reports in NC were too numerous to mention, but quite noteworthy was one at Biltmore Estate from 13-15 May (Jay Wherley) and another at Mills River Park *Henderson* from 14-16 Apr (Sue Madson et al.). One at Fort Liberty *Cumberland* on 20 May (Jarrett Stephens) and two at a drop zone in the Sandhills Game Land *Scotland* on 28 Apr (Jeff Beane) were on their breeding grounds.

Clay-colored Sparrow: This species occasionally overwinters in the Carolinas, in addition to being a rare migrant. At least one overwintering bird was last seen at North River Farms *Carteret* on 14 Apr by Martin Wall and Curtiss Merrick. Presumed overwintering singles were re-found at Fort Fisher on 1 Mar (Ken Ashe) and at Dix Park in Raleigh on 26 Apr (Chip Davis, Quentin Read). One was carefully studied by Jeffrey Turner along Wells Road *Lincoln* NC on 20 Mar, and Tim Novak et al. saw another at Mills River Park *Henderson* on 25-26 Apr. There were no sightings from SC.

Harris's Sparrow: The individual that provided the region's first ever overwintering record stayed ay Warren Wilson College *Buncombe* as late as 7 May, as last photographed by Walter Somerville. It was first reported on 21 Dec 2023 and "stayed loyal to" a few White-crowned Sparrows during its stay.

Vesper Sparrow: Though recorded from a few dozen sites in each state this spring, migrant numbers are far below those of several decades ago, probably owing mainly to loss of its field and meadow breeding habitats in the Northeastern States and eastern Canada.

Seaside Sparrow: Breeding birds still are present on the mainland side of Pamlico Sound, with a good tally of five made by Lucas Wilson and Lydia Pultorak on 18 May at Gull Rock Game Land *Hyde*. Silas Hernandez noted two in the Stumpy Point area of *Dare* on 18 Apr and two more on 17 Apr near the town of Swan Quarter *Hyde*.

Nelson's Sparrow: Though this coastal wintering species migrates over the region to its breeding grounds in Canada and the Northern Plains, no one encountered it inland this spring.

Henslow's Sparrow: Three birds that were seen Feb near Saint Matthews *Calhoun* SC were still present on 13 Mar, as photographed by Elizabeth Anderegg, Craig Watson, and Pamela Ford. Sadly, the only NC reports came from the primary breeding site at the Voice of America Game Land *Beaufort*; birds were first seen on 17 Mar (Trevor Sleight), with a peak tally of 20 birds on 17 May (Isaac Smith et al.).

Lincoln's Sparrow: This secretive species was noted at perhaps 15 sites in NC this spring, but at just four in SC. One photograph at Savannah NWR *Jasper* on 5 Mar by Mark Miller was likely an overwintering bird.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Spring reports were very scarce this year, with NC having just one – photographed at a feeder in Aurora *Beaufort* on 27-28 Mar by Cynthia Crane. In SC, one was photographed by Ken and Julie Davis on 4 Mar at Pawleys Island *Georgetown* and another photographed by Travis Stewart at Saint Helena Island *Beaufort* on 7 Mar. Each record involved an adult male.

Bobolink: The spring migration through the region was mediocre at best, with hardly any huge counts. A few mountain records involved birds on territory, southeast of Boone *Watauga*.

Bullock's Oriole: Lingering into the spring season was an overwintering adult male at a feeder in Fuquay-Varina *Wake* through 2 Mar (Jim Hunsberger). A female was photographed at a feeder east of Fayetteville *Cumberland* on 21 Mar by Yvonne Porter. In SC were an immature male at a feeder in *Aiken* on 1-2 Apr (Julie Mobley, Mary Jo Dawson), and another of that age and sex photographed in *Charleston* on 8 Mar (Stacy Turner).

Shiny Cowbird: Recent records have been few in the Carolinas, probably owing to an eradication program in Florida (to protect Painted Buntings). At a site that has "hosted" this species previously, the feeders at Fort Macon SP were visited by a male, as photographed by Martin Wall on 31 May.

Brewer's Blackbird: As usual, the only NC records were in the mountains, as this region lies on the eastern edge of the migration route. Identification is often quite difficult, and perhaps the only one with a photograph was one by Nathaniel Axtell in *Transylvania* on 1 Mar. Along the migration route, Dobbins Farm at Townville once again had many reports, including a flock of 25 seen by George McHenry on 29 Mar and on 5 Apr; other birders noted the species there through 6 Apr. A large flock of 42 was tallied by Matt Johnson and Brad Sale at Mayesville *Sumter* SC on 2 Mar. Another sizable flock of 17 was seen by Steve Patterson at *Allendale* SC on 29 Mar.

Golden-winged Warbler: This was a very poor spring for migrant warblers in the Carolinas, owing to a scarcity of strong fronts and westerly winds at night from mid-Apr to mid-May. Thus, most "Trans-Gulf" migrants like this and many other warbler species stayed to the west of our region. Spring reports of this species were very sparse, other than from the montane breeding range in NC, with only a few in the *Wake* area being it!

Blue-winged Warbler: This species routinely passes through much of the Carolinas as a spring and fall migrant, and there were a few dozen reports on eBird. None in NC were east of *Nash*, but SC did have a few lower Coastal Plain reports, including one photographed at Francis Beidler preserve *Dorchester* on 23 Apr by Matt Johnson.

"Brewster's Warbler": This hybrid was photographed singing like a Golden-winged Warbler on 26 May along Yellow Mountain Gap Trail *Avery* NC, by Sam Cooper and Jacob Annis. Another male was paired with a female Golden-winged Warbler near Mars Hill *Madison* NC, as seen by Clayton Gibb and Clifton Avery on 15 May. These latter two observers saw another hybrid singing a Golden-winged song on 17 May at the Long Branch Education Center *Buncombe*.

Prothonotary Warbler: A singing bird noted by Simon Thompson and his Ventures Birding group on 16 Apr at Murphy *Cherokee* NC might be a potential breeder. There seem to be no previous breeding reports for the southwestern counties, despite the low (below 2000 feet) elevations; however, this scarcity might be owing to very few observers in this region.

Swainson's Warbler: A decade or two ago, this was considered an uncommon breeding bird, mostly of the Coastal Plain, Piedmont foothills, and low elevations (generally below 2500 feet) in the mountains. However, this spring, the records exploded, and this warbler is now singing on territory over much of the central and southern Piedmont of NC and the Piedmont of SC now. Birds are now moving higher into the NC mountains as well, and only *Ashe* and *Alleghany* lacked reports this season.

Tennessee Warbler: Despite a poor spring migration for Trans-Gulf migrants, this species was reported often in the western half of NC and at nearly ten sites in SC. Most remarkable was a singing bird photographed on the coast at Duck *Dare* on 13 May by David True. Sadly, several eBird reports from the SC coast had no details with them and are not included here owing to potential difficulty of identification.

Orange-crowned Warbler: Practically unreported in spring prior to 2020 in the northern NC mountains, a few have been reported in recent years; and Guy McGrane saw two together at Boone on 21 Apr and another nearby on 26 Apr.

Nashville Warbler: Somewhat less numerous in the East than the Tennessee Warbler, this rare spring migrant was still detected about a dozen times in NC eastward to Raleigh, where John Lynch photographed one on 11 May, a notable record in spring. Perhaps an overwintering bird was one photographed on 22 Mar by Tyler Sharer at James Island *Charleston* SC, and another coastal record was photographed on 30 Apr by Jenn Clementoni at Harbor Island *Beaufort* SC.

Connecticut Warbler: Always notable anywhere and anytime in the Carolinas, extremely rare along the SC coast in spring was one photographed by Alex Grant on 15 May at Hunting Island *Beaufort*. There were additional reports from NC montane counties in *Transylvania* on 10-12 May, *Henderson* on 15-16 May, and *McDowell* on 16-17 May; and upper Piedmont SC counties in *Oconee* on 8 May, *Greenville* on 13 May, and *Anderson* on 13-15 May.

Mourning Warbler: Another always notable species, one photographed at Brevard *Transylvania* on 15 May by Nathaniel Axtell and others was the only spring report.

Cape May Warbler: This species winters in the West Indies and migrates NNW through SC and the western half of NC. Thus, one seen by Robert Lethco at Nags Head Woods preserve on 9 May was notable along the coast.

Cerulean Warbler: Very rare along the coast, at any season, one was seen and heard singing by Jeff Lewis at Southern Shores *Dare* on 8 May. Otherwise, there were no spring reports east of Winston-Salem or Charlotte NC.

Magnolia Warbler: Though not a good spring season for it, there were dozens of regional reports on eBird, and scattered reports on the coast from *Currituck, Dare*, and *Brunswick* in NC and from *Georgetown* and *Charleston* in SC.

Bay-breasted Warbler: A male molting into breeding plumage was photographed by Mereth Alexander at her feeder in Wake Forest *Wake* on 11 Mar and again on 24 Mar by Sheri Thompson. This Trans-Gulf migrant was in somewhat lower than usual numbers this spring in the mountains and Piedmont, though notable along the coast were one seen and recorded by Michael Moss at Nags Head on 9 May, photographed by Jeff Lewis at Duck on 20 May, and seen by Daniel Irons at Hatteras village on 25 May. Several reported in eBird along the SC coast lacked details and thus are excluded here.

Blackburnian Warbler: The numerous reports as shown on eBird this spring were similar to those of the Bay-breasted Warbler, with only a few reports from the Coastal Plain. Michael Moss saw one at Nags Head Woods preserve on 15 May, and Jeff Lewis photographed one at Audubon Trail *Currituck* on 29 May. Farther south along the coast, a male was seen by Jesse Anderson on 9 May at Carolina Beach SP *New Hanover*. As

with Bay-breasted and several other warbler species quite rare along the coast in spring, records accepted by eBird reviewers but without comment are excluded here.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: Another warbler quite rare in the Coastal Plain in spring, notable along the NC coast were one seen by Daniel Irons at Salvo *Dare* on 15 May and by him at Pea Island on the same day.

Townsend's Warbler: One that may well have overwintered locally was photographed by Daniel Irons at Alligator River NWR on 16 Mar. There have been a handful of records in the last few years for *Dare*, but this is the first from the mainland.

Canada Warbler: This species was in much reduced numbers as a migrant in the Carolinas this spring; there were no eBird reports at all east of *Wake* NC and *Richland* SC.

Wilson's Warbler: Still another warbler species seen in fewer numbers this spring than usual, SC had just two reports – one photographed at Oil Camp Creek *Greenville* on 2 May by Samuel Payne, and one seen in *Greenville* on 12 May by Tim Kalbach.

Summer Tanager: Reporting of this species from the NC mountains seems to be too lax, with far too many observers reporting the species with no details or comments, owing to the species being on the eBird base list for that county. This editor has no way to know whether this species is really present at most places, as the Summer Tanager does not likely breed in most counties. One heard singing in a dry forest and heard giving the typical call, by Chris Kelly on 11 May on the Boogerman Trail *Haywood* is notable in elevation, whether a breeding bird or not.

Western Tanager: This stray occurred at many regional sites this past winter, and a few stayed into spring. One at Sam Cooper's feeder in Wilmington over the winter was last noted on 19 Mar. On the other hand, a male photographed at a Wilmington feeder by Jesse Anderson on 18 Apr had only been there for one or two previous days, according to the homeowner. A male was photographed by an unnamed person at Moore *Spartanburg* SC on 28 Apr. A female was photographed at a feeder in Hemingway *Florence* SC from 19-21 Mar by James Eaddy et al. In the *Charleston* area were one photographed by Dennis Forsythe on 17 Mar, two photographed by Nicole Turner from 18-27 Mar, and another photographed by Russell Johnson from 15 Mar – 17 Apr. Lastly, one was seen by Jonathan Watkins at Hilton Head Island on 2 Apr.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: This species was reported in good numbers this spring, even at many sites along the coast and in the inner Coastal Plain, where often hard to find in spring.

Blue Grosbeak: This species has yet to be a recorded as a breeding resident in NC over perhaps 2800 feet elevation. However, a male found singing above 5000 feet was noted by David Schroeder along Yellow Mountain Gap Trail *Avery* on 25 May, and it was photographed by Sam Cooper and Jacob Annis on 26 May; it likely was a wandering, non-breeding bird.

Painted Bunting: The seemingly unpaired male returned to Dix Park in Raleigh (if it didn't remain undetected during the winter) for a third season, as noted by Chip Davis and many others, far out of the regular breeding range. There were many other reports in NC of clearly non-breeding birds, from *Mecklenburg, Alamance, Caswell*, and *Orange* in the Piedmont; and from a good handful of interior Coastal Plain locales. On the other hand, the species nests over much of the SC Coastal Plain; but the few Piedmont reports on eBird lacked details.

Dickcissel: Suggesting of breeding were two singing near Statesville *Iredell* NC, beginning on 31 May, as was another on that day noted by Ryan Justice at the Guilford County Farm. A migrant was rare in *Haywood* NC, as seen by Bob Dellinger on 15 Mar. In upstate SC there were potential breeding birds noted in *Cherokee, Spartanburg, Laurens* (at least three males), and *Anderson*. Toward the coast, one singing near Hobucken *Pamlico* on 12-14 May (David Schroder et al.) was notable for that area. At the nearby North River Farms *Carteret*, the species continued to be present all year; the peak count of males was three during May (Martin Wall et al.).

Did You Know?

Full copies of *The Chat* dating back to the very first issue, March 1937, are available for viewing online. Find these and more at:
https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/chat/

The Chat
BULLETIN OF THE NORTH CAROLINA BIRD CLUB
PUBLISHED AT RALEIGH, N. C.
JOHN H. GREY, JR., EDITOR
1719 PARK DRIVE

VOL 1 March, 1937 No. 1

Fifty Years Ago in The Chat

Steve Shultz

June 1974. Eggs cost forty-five cents a dozen, a gallon of gasoline ran forty-two cents (and lasted longer with the newly enacted national speed limit of 55 mph), and the national average monthly rent was a princely $185. Shoppers at the local bookstore found a freshman effort novel named *Carrie* by a previously unknown author, Stephen King, and the world's tallest building, the Sears Tower, loomed over Chicago.

In *The Chat*, edited by Eloise Potter, Joshua A. Lee wrote on the *Relative Contributions of Male and Female Purple Martins to Feeding of Young* (spoiler alert: they both contributed in roughly equal fashion), and Paul A. Stewart described *Roosting Behavior of Starlings in North Carolina* (starlings roosted in groups big and small as well as individually).

James F. Hollingsworth Jr. of Goldsboro, NC wrote of a recent trip to Mattamuskeet NWR in coastal North Carolina where he hoped to film breeding Bald Eagles. While a single pair nested in 1971, no birds were found nesting in 1972, and a lack of reports from nearby Dare County suggested that the species had essentially become extirpated as a local breeder. This anecdotal evidence was bolstered by an annual survey by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service noting 627 active Bald Eagle nests were surveyed in the contiguous forty-eight states in 1973, but none were found in North Carolina, and only two were found in South Carolina, the latter producing a total of one fledged bird. Hollingsworth noted that the chemical DDT was thought to be a factor in the decline of nesting Bald Eagles but opined that destruction of natural habitat was also a significant factor. Fortunately for the eagles, and birders hoping to enjoy the majestic raptors, Bald Eagles once again are a fairly common sight along the coast and at favored wintering locations, and the species is now a relatively common breeding bird in both states

In Briefs for the Files, covering the winter of 1973-1974, a "major winter invasion" of Fulvous Tree Ducks was enjoyed by birders in coastal areas of both states. The aforementioned Bald Eagle was observed in four locations, two in each state. While not lucky enough to spot an eagle, birders in North Wilkesboro, NC enjoyed a Long-eared Owl for the second year in a row, while Jay Carter observed a single Bewick's Wren at Lake Surf in Moore County, NC.

Finally, the June 1974 issue of *The Chat* featured a cover photograph of North Carolina's first record of Burrowing Owl, which was collected from Dare County in February 1967. That state's second record, a sight report from John Fussell and Don McCrimmon, is detailed in General Field Notes. The note indicates that since the specimen could not be collected or captured, the specific subspecies remained unknown.

H. Douglas Pratt

CAROLINA BIRD CLUB

www.carolinabirdclub.org

The Carolina Bird Club is a non-profit organization which represents and supports the birding community in the Carolinas through its official website, publications, meetings, workshops, trips, and partnerships, whose mission is

- To promote the observation, enjoyment, and study of birds.
- To provide opportunities for birders to become acquainted, and to share information and experience.
- To maintain well-documented records of birds in the Carolinas.
- To support the protection and conservation of birds and their habitats and foster an appreciation and respect of natural resources.
- To promote educational opportunities in bird and nature study.
- To support research on birds of the Carolinas and their habitats.

Membership is open to all persons interested in the conservation, natural history, and study of wildlife with particular emphasis on birds. Dues, contributions, and bequests to the Club may be deductible from state and federal income and estate taxes to the extent allowable. Pay dues or make donations at https://carolinabirdclub.org/dues. Make change of address at https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/members/profile. Send correspondence regarding membership matters to the Headquarters Secretary. Answers to questions about the club might be found at https://carolinabirdclub.org/about.html.

ANNUAL DUES

Individual or non-profit	$30.00
Family	$35.00
Student	$15.00
Sustaining and businesses	$30.00
Patron	$50.00 and up
Life Membership (payable in four consecutive $125 installments)	$500.00
Associate Life Membership (in same household as life member)	$100.00

ELECTED OFFICERS

President	Susan Campbell, Apex NC	susan@ncaves.com
NC Vice-Presidents	Christine Stoughton Root, Arapahoe NC	
	Katie Greenberg, Arden NC	
SC Vice-President	Julie Davis, Pawleys Island SC	
Secretary	Karaleah Reichart, Raleigh NC	
Treasurer	Mark Songer, Greenville SC	
NC Members-at-Large	Kevin Burke, Hendersonville, NC	
	Betsy Kane, Washington NC	
	Paul Laurent, Banner Elk NC	
	Bob Lewis, Durham NC	
SC Members-at-Large	Richard Hayes, Charleston SC	
	Jennifer Roberts, Columbia SC	

EX-OFFICIO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chat Editor	Steve Shultz, Apex, NC	chat@carolinabirdclub.org
Newsletter Editor	Steve Dowlan, Vilas, NC	newsletter@carolinabirdclub.org
Website Editor	Kent Fiala, Hillsborough, NC	webeditor@carolinabirdclub.org
Immediate Past President	Steve Tracy, Gastonia, NC	

HEADQUARTERS SECRETARY

Amanda Laurent	1800 Meadow Ave Banner Elk NC 28604 hq@carolinabirdclub.org

The Chat

Vol. 88 Fall 2024 No. 4

Carolina Bird Club
www.carolinabirdclub.org

The Quarterly Bulletin of the Carolina Bird Club, Inc.
The Ornithological Society of the Carolinas

THE CHAT

ISSN No. 0009-1987

Quarterly Bulletin of Carolina Bird Club, Inc.

1909 Lakepark Drive, Raleigh NC 27612

Vol. 88 **Fall 2024** **No. 4**

General Field Notes Editors
North Carolina **Christina Harvey**
South Carolina **William Post**

Briefs for the Files **Harry LeGrand**

Editor **Steve Shultz**
2404 Bristers Spring Way
Apex, NC 27523
chat@carolinabirdclub.org

THE CHAT is published quarterly by the Carolina Bird Club, Inc., 1800 Meadow Avenue, Banner Elk NC 28604. Subscription price $30 per year.

Copyright © 2024 by Carolina Bird Club, Inc. Except for purposes of review, material contained herein may not be reproduced without written permission from the Carolina Bird Club, Inc.

Articles

Evaluation for Southeastern American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius paulus*) in the Coastal Plain of South Carolina
Samuel H. deMent and Elizabeth Wommack.....83

Briefs for the Files

Summer 2024 *Harry LeGrand*.....88

Cover: Bay-breasted Warbler, 29 Sep 2024, Chatham County, NC.
Photograph by Mary Sonis.

Evaluation for Southeastern American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius paulus*) in the Coastal Plain of South Carolina

Samual H. deMent[1] and Elizabeth Womack
[1]356 Pioneer Loop
Georgetown, SC 29440

Introduction

The Southeastern American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius paulus*) is a threatened subspecies of *Falco sparverius* which is known to reside in Florida, Georgia (GA), Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana (Smallwood and Collopy 2009), considered to be identifiable from *F. sparverius* most reliably by its smaller size (Howe and King 1902) and possible difference in color (but see Smallwood et al. 1999). The subspecies previously bred in South Carolina, with the range line estimated to be at the North Carolina / South Carolina (SC) border (Miller et al. 2012). Breen and Parrish (1997) identified Southeastern American Kestrels at U.S. Army Fort Gordon, which is near the SC / GA border, based on body mass and phenotypic measurements, but definitive genetic analyses were not performed. Beheler and Dunning (1998) reported the Southeastern American Kestrel at the Savannah River Site in Aiken County, SC, based on field sightings, but did not perform genetic studies or capture techniques. We previously performed genetic / microsatellite (msat) analysis of 25 separate nest box nestlings at nearby U.S. Army Fort Jackson in Columbia, SC and determined that the population more closely aligned with the more common northern subspecies of American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius sparverius*) (deMent et al. 2014). However, 77 American Kestrels banded by deMent (Master Personal Banding Permit 22771) since 2002 along the coastal plain in Williamsburg County, SC, identified a number of very small kestrels in 2005 and 2012 (e.g., male body weight 97.6 g, wing chord 180 mm; male body weight 100.5 g, wing chord 188 mm), raising suspicion that these individuals could be identified as the Southeastern American Kestrel (Breen and Parrish, Jr. 1997). Layne and Smith (1992) compared 37 wintering *Falco sparverius sparverius* (F.s.s.) and 29 resident *Falco sparverius paulus* (F.s.p.) in south-central Florida and found statistical difference in both body mass and wing chord for the two subspecies with male body mass and wing chord for F.s.s. 96 – 121 g and 176 – 192 mm respectively; compared to F.s.p. body mass female and wing chord 84 – 109 g, 170 – 184 mm respectively. Similarly, for female body mass and wing chord for F.s.s. was 108 – 149 g, 184 – 204 mm respectively; compared to F.s.p. 88 – 119 g, 163 – 190 mm respectively. Therefore, in 2019, 14 kestrel nest boxes were erected and monitored in Williamsburg County, SC along the coastal plain for five years to identify a breeding population of American Kestrel, and if identified, further evaluate for the presence of the Southeastern American Kestrel subspecies in SC. deMent and deMent (2010) previously employed nest boxes in the western piedmont of SC, and confirmed a breeding population of American Kestrels, but no genetic studies were performed.

Methods

Fourteen wooden kestrel nest boxes were erected in Williamsburg County, SC in the fall of 2019 at sites where both male and female kestrels had been previously captured and banded during the winter months in open heavily cultivated landscapes with border swamp/ lowlands. Boxes were placed 3.96 meters (m) above ground and a 0.76 m sheet metal predator guard was wrapped around the pole 2 m above the ground. Nest boxes were maintained, painted, and nesting materials removed during the non-breeding season, and 5 centimeters (cm) of pine shavings placed in the bottom of the nest boxes. Thirty-five visits to the nest box study area were documented from 2019 to 2024, which included winter banding during February, nest box visits of at least once a month during the nesting season and fall and early winter nest box maintenance trips.

Bal chatri noose traps were employed during winter banding, containing a house mouse as a lure (*Mus musculus*) (deMent and deMent 2001). Kestrels were processed according to Master Personal Banding Permit 22771 and 22771(a) guidelines. An aluminum, 3B butt end band was placed on the bird, each bird was weighed to the nearest 0.1gram (g) (Ohaus Scout II calibrated digital scale, Pine Brook, NJ), and non-flattened wing chord was measured to the nearest millimeter. The location of capture, age (North American Bird Banding Manual 1991, 1997) and condition were documented, and the bird was released unharmed after processing (deMent and deMent 2001). A single outer rectrix was pulled to generate regrowth, placed in a labeled envelope, and stored at room temperature for future microsatellite and isotopic analyses (Hobson et al. 2009). All statistical analyses were performed with unpaired t-tests (GraphPad Prism 10.25, Boston MA).

Results

No American Kestrels occupied the 14 nest boxes during the 2019 – 2024 study period. Nest box use by other species was observed, with Eastern Bluebirds (*Sialia sialis*) being the most frequent occupier, followed by European Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*), Eastern Screech-Owls (*Megascops asio*) and Carolina Wrens (*Thryothorus lidovicianus*) (Table 1). Thirteen of the 14 nest boxes were occupied by other species during the study period, with only nest box #12 not occupied once during the five-year period.

During the winter months of 2020 – 2024, 39 American Kestrels were captured with Bal chatri noose traps. Of the 39 captures, two were foreign band encounters (FBE) and one was a recapture. One FBE was banded as a nestling in Cheshire County, New Hampshire in 2020, while the second FBE was originally banded as a nestling in Litchfield County, Connecticut in 2019. The 2020 recapture was previously captured as an adult in 2019 at the same location in Williamsburg County, SC. Bird weights were recorded in 34 of the 39 captured Kestrels. The overall mean body weight was 118.3 + 15 g (range 96 – 145.9 g). For 16 males, body weight was 109.2 + 8.4 g (range 96 – 129.9 g) and for 15 females 129.9 + 13.2 (range 96.3 – 145.9 g). Males were statistically lighter than females ($P < 0.0001$). Wing chord measurements were performed on all 39 captured kestrels. Male wing chords were 186.0 + 5.3 mm (range 176 – 196 mm), while female wing chords were 195.3 + 8.3 mm (range 179 – 203 mm). As expected, male wing chords were statistically shorter than female wing chords ($P < 0.0162$). Two Eastern Screech Owls were banded, one adult and one nestling from a nest box during the study period. No adult American Kestrels were observed in the study area after April

15th (2023), otherwise, the latest kestrel sighting during the study period, was April 4th (2022) for one adult kestrel.

There were seven wintering American Kestrels captured that met the body mass criteria for the Southeastern American Kestrel subspecies by Breen and Parrish, Jr. (1997) (males weights range: 88 – 104.2 g; females: 95.1 – 107.5 g) in nearby coastal Georgia. The seven kestrels consisted of six males and one female. The actual weights were 96, 99.4, 96.3, 104.1, 99.4, 97.6, and 100.5 g. The remaining kestrels' weights were outside the criteria previously considered as within the body mass range of the Southeastern American Kestrel, based on the coastal Georgia study (Breen and Parrish, Jr 1997).

Discussion

During the winter months, along the southern Southeastern U.S. coastline, both subspecies of American Kestrels (*Falco sparverius sparverius* and *Falco sparverius paulus*) coexist and share similar habitats (Hinnebusch et al. 2010). These two subspecies are nearly indistinguishable in the field. Recently, microsatellite analyses have been used to distinguish the subspecies (Miller et al. 2012, deMent et al. 2014). Although over the 2019 – 2024 study period, we were unsuccessful in identifying a breeding kestrel population in Williamsburg County, SC, they may still be present in the area in small numbers. In a stable isotope study of 48 wintering American Kestrels in South Carolina, only 9.3 + 3.5% of the kestrels were found to be residents, while the remainder were migrants from further north (Hobson et al. 2009). Hobson (2009) included feather samples from Williamsburg County, SC in that study.

Although seven potential wintering kestrels were identified that may represent the Southeastern American Kestrel subspecies, genetic / genomic studies are complicated and require a larger sample size to determine with certainty whether the threatened subspecies is present in the study area. Previous msat analysis (Miller et al. 2012, deMent et al. 2014) have not examined birds from this specific area, but isotopic analysis (Hobson et al. 2009) along with morphometric measurements taken in during this study of wintering birds suggest that there may be overlap. More recent genomic studies on American Kestrels in North America did not examine birds from the southeast, except for Florida and North Carolina (Ruegg et al. 2021). This leaves significant portions of the Atlantic coast and the edges of the subspecies range for the Southeastern American Kestrel unexamined. If breeding kestrels are captured in the future, the application of morphometric studies in combination with genetic/genomic studies would be meaningful.

Negative nest box studies for American Kestrels do not exclude that breeding kestrels are absent in the study area and may require additional years of monitoring and field observation to establish that breeders are truly absent. While many published reports of nest box use by American Kestrels highlight high nest box occupancy rates (Smallwood and Collopy 2009), not all sites show this. Breen (1997) only reported a 3% occupancy rate over the three-year study period in 402 nest boxes along the coastal plain of Georgia. Factors that could affect the preference of nest box versus natural cavity for birds include sizes of natural cavities, direction of orientation, and presence of nest predators and nest site competition (Bortolotti 1994; Breen and Parrish Jr. 1997; Kamm and Michael Reed 2020). The presence of dead snag trees (cypress – *Taxodium sp.*) in swamp areas that contain numerous natural cavities for nesting may be preferred to artificial nest boxes in our study area. Smallwood and Collopy (2009) reported that artificial nest boxes were

more often utilized by kestrels in Longleaf Pine (*Pinus palustris*) habitat compared to other habitats in their study area. More work could be done that examines habitat use and nesting preferences in nest box areas with low nest box occupancy.

However, just because the nest boxes were not used by American Kestrels in the breeding period does not mean that the creation and maintenance of the nest boxes did not bring any benefit to the conservation and education for the kestrels and other cavity nesting birds. We believe that strategic placement and maintenance of nest boxes including annual cleaning, replacement of pine shavings in bottom of nest box, and touch up painting do promote wildlife conservation (Smallwood et al. 2009). Nest box programs can form a bridge between conservation and private landowners, allowing researchers and banders to educate and work with landowners, emphasizing the value of raptors as a form of rodent control, providing artificial cavities for cavernous nesters, and encouraging co-participation by landowners as stakeholders in wildlife conservation. Three landowners and the son of another landowner actually participated in erection of nest boxes and provided personal resources for the work. In addition, one large landowner's grandson has taken an interest in this study's nest box project and hopefully will continue to maintain the nest boxes in the future and well as pass the baton to future landowners to support wildlife conservation in the study area and throughout Williamsburg County, SC.

Acknowledgements

This study was supported in part by a Conservation Grant from the Carolina Bird Club. Kyle Miles, a graduate student in the Biology Department at Coastal Carolina University in Conway, SC assisted in the erection of most nest boxes in 2019. Nine Williamson County, SC private landowners are acknowledged for their permission to place nest boxes on their property, while four landowners actually participated in the erection of nest boxes on their property and are further acknowledged. Jack McGill, a student at Williamsburg Academy in Kingstree, SC assisted in nest box maintenance.

Table 1. Nest Box Occupancy, Years 2020 – 2024

	Nest Box Number													
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
2020			EABL	EABL		EABL	EABL							
2021	EASO	EABL	EABL	EABL		EABL	EABL	EABL		EABL				
2022		EABL	EABL	EUST		EABL		EABL	EABL	EUST	EUST		EABL	EABL
2023			EABL	EUST		EABL	EUST	EABL	EABL		EUST		EABL	EABL
2024	CAWR		EABL	EUST		EABL		EABL			EUST		EABL	EABL

Eastern Screech Owl = EASO, Eastern Bluebird = EABL, European Starling = EUST, Carolina Wren = CAWR

Literature Cited

Beheler, A.A., and J.B. Dunning, Jr. 1998. American Kestrel use of pine regeneration stands in South Carolina. Chat. 62: 173-179.

Breen, T.R., and J.W. Parrish Jr. 1997. American Kestrel distribution and use of nest boxes in the coastal plain of Georgia. Florida. Field Naturalist. 25: 128-137.

Bortolotti, G.R. 1994. Effect of Nest-box Size on Nest-Site Preference and Reproduction in American Kestrels. J. Raptor Res. 28: 127 – 133.

deMent, S.H., and A.B. deMent. 2010. Nest box use by American Kestrels in the Western Piedmont of South Carolina. Oriole 75: 7-12.

deMent, S.H., and R.S. deMent. 2001. Capture rate of American Kestrels during the non-breeding season influenced by sex of bird in upstate South Carolina. Chat 65: 90-93.

deMent, S.H., S.T. Rikard, and E.A. Wommack. 2014. Genetic evaluation for *Falco sparverius paulus* within a breeding American Kestrels in the midlands/ sandhills region of South Carolina. Oriole 79: 1-16.

deMent, S.H., K.J. Sultzer, and S.T. Rikard. 2016. A study of American Kestrels (*Falco sparverius*) nest box occupancy and natal dispersal in the midlands/sandhills region of South Carolina. Oriole 81: 58-67.

Hobson, K.A., S.H. deMent, S.L. Van Wilgenburg, and L.I. Wassenaar. 2009. Potential Molt origins of American Kestrels wintering at two southern U. S. sites: An investigation using stable isotope (D18O) methods. J. Raptor Res. 29:135-137.

Howe, H.B., and L. King. 1902. Contributions to North American Ornithology. 1: 25-32 https://biodiversitylibrary.org/page/56871750

Kamm, M., J. Michael Reed. 2020. Assessing Microhabitat Characteristics as Predictors of Nest-Box Occupancy in a Declining Bird Species, the American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*). Northeastern Naturalist. 27: 344 – 357.

Layne, J.N., and D.R. Smith. 1992. Size comparison of resident and wintering American Kestrels in South-Central Florida. J. Field Ornith. 63: 256-263.

Miller, K.E., and J.A. Smallwood. 1997. Natal dispersal and philopatry of Southeastern American Kestrels in Florida. Wilson Bull. 109: 226-232.

North American Bird Banding Manual, Vol I, II. 1991, 1997. Canadian and U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Ruegg, K.C., M. Brinkmeyer, C.M. Bossu, R.A. Bay, E.C. Anderson, C.W. Boal, R.D. Dawson, A. Eschenbauch, C.J.W. McClure, K.E. Miller, L. Morrow, J. Morrow, M.D. Oleyar, B. Ralph, S. Schulwitz, T. Swem, J.F. Therrien, R. Van Buskirk, T.B. Smith, and J.A. Heath. 2021. The American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) genoscape: Implications for monitoring, management, and subspecies bounderies. Ornithology. 138: 1 – 14.

Smallwood, J.A., C. Natale, K. Steenhof, M. Meetz, and C.D. Marti. 1999. Clinal variation in the juvenal plumage of American Kestrels. J. Field Ornith. 70: 425-435.

Smallwood, J.A., M.F. Causey, D.H. Mossop, J.R. Kluesarits, B. Roberson, S. Roberson, J. Mason, M.J. Maurer, R. J. Melvin, R.D. Dawson, G.R. Bartolotti, J.W. Parrish Jr, J.F. Breen, and K. Boyd. 2009. Why are American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) populations declining in North America? Evidence from nest-box programs. J. Raptor Res. 43: 274-82.

Smallwood, J.A., and M.E. Collopy. 2009. Southeastern American kestrels respond to an increase in the availability of nest cavities in North-Central Florida. J. Raptor Res 43: 291-300.

Smallwood, J.A., and D.M. Bird. 2020. American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), version 1.0 In Birds of the World (A.F. Poole and F. B. Gills, Editors). Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY, USA. https://doi.org/10.2173/bow.amekes.01.

Shuford, W.R. 1997. Nest box use, reproductive success, and nestling growth of American Kestrels (*Falco sparverius*) along the coastal plain of Georgia. https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/etd_legacy/670.

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

Harry LeGrand
1109 Nichols Drive
Raleigh, NC 27605
hlegrandjr@gmail.com

(All dates 1 June – 31 July 2024, unless otherwise noted)

Briefs for the Files is a seasonal collection of uncommon-to-rare or unusual North and South Carolina bird sightings and events that do not necessarily require a more detailed General Field Note or article in The Chat. The majority of these sightings are taken from eBird reports and that website. Other reports are taken from the Carolinabirds listserv, with some from various Facebook group sites, iNaturalist and several other websites, and from direct correspondence with the Briefs for the Files editor.

Nearly all of the eBird reports have been accepted/vetted by regional reviewers in the Carolinas. Other reports included here have been considered valid by the Briefs editor, as long as a written description and/or photographs accompanied the reports. However, a few of the records included in these Briefs should be further reviewed by state bird records committees for ultimate acceptance.

Reports of very rare birds might warrant a General Field Note in this journal. You can submit your Field Note directly to the Chat editor without going through me.

Abbreviations: **BRC** = Bird Records Committee; **et al.** = and others; **m. obs**. = multiple observers; **NC** = North Carolina; **NP** = National Park; **NWR** = National Wildlife Refuge; **SC =** South Carolina; **SP** = State Park; **WMA** = Wildlife Management Area.

All place names in italics are counties.

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck: There were nearly a dozen NC records for the summer, all near the coast except for two photographed by Eric Cormier near Turkey *Sampson* on 1 July. As many as four were seen nearly all summer at Orton Pond *Brunswick* (m. obs.); there are several Wood Duck boxes at this lake, and one must wonder if a whistling-duck pair actually did nest there. In SC, where there were many dozen reports, the only Piedmont report was two photographed in *Newberry* on both 1 June and 29 July.

Snow Goose: One adult remained from the spring season at a pond on Fort Jackson *Richland* SC, where photographed on 26 June by Adam Elvington and Michelle Wilcox.

Ross's Goose: One must wonder if an adult photographed on 29 July at a pond with Canada Geese in *Forsyth* NC (Toby Amodeo) was feral or was sick/injured.

Brant: Seldom seen in the region in summer, notable was one that lingered on North Pond at Pea Island NWR *Dare* NC from 26 June – 6 July (m. obs.). Three were noted nearby at the Oregon Inlet area on 17 June (Daniel Irons).

Tundra Swan: Single birds were noted in eastern NC near Belhaven *Hyde* on 3 June by Evan Miller, and at J. Morgan Futch Game Land *Tyrrell* on 21 July by Gerald Head and Robert Lethco.

Blue-winged Teal: There were a few scattered records in NC, including a few far inland. A pair at a Mattamuskeet NWR *Hyde* NC impoundment on 5 June, as photographed by Eric Cormier and Joshua Emm, were likely not local breeders, but the species formerly did nest in small numbers along the northern coast.

Northern Shoveler: Andrew Thornton saw a late bird at Pea Island NWR on 3 June.

American Wigeon: Unusual in summer were two photographed by Ann Stinely at White Oak Impoundment *Onslow* NC on 15 June; and surprising were seven birds photographed by Karen Lebing at South Pond at Pea Island refuge on 12 June and five seen by Matt Lawing at a nearby impoundment on 15 June. Even more unusual, in SC were two that lingered to early summer at Huntington Beach SP *Georgetown*, as noted by Zealon Wight-Maier on 1 June and by Carla Ostrand (documented by a photo) on 3 June.

American Black Duck: This coastal breeding species was widely reported in eastern NC, but as many as five far inland at Jordan Lake *Chatham* on 18 July (Spike Millington) was quite unusual at this season, as were two at Roanoke Rapids Lake *Northampton* on 7 June (Teresa Noel, Karen Hogan).

Mottled Duck: Though locally common along the SC coast, it is still a rarity in NC, where two birds were seen at the NC Aquarium pond at Fort Fisher *New Hanover* on 2 June by Zane Fish and on 11 June by Harvey Clodfelter.

Green-winged Teal: An adult male seen at a swamp in *Lincoln* NC on 20 June by Alex Lowe-Massi was quite unusual at that season.

Redhead: Likely a sick or injured bird remained essentially all summer at the Salt Pond at Cape Hatteras point *Dare* NC (m. obs.), and another was photographed at Pea Island NWR by Karen Lebing on 12 June.

Ring-necked Duck: There were numerous reports of stragglers in NC, but in SC quite unusual were three seen at Chicora Plantation *Georgetown* on 23 June by Mark Johnson and Jay Chandler.

Greater Scaup: Seldom documented (by photos) in summer, single females were photographed in NC by Eric Cormier and Joshua Emm on 18 June at Point of Marsh *Carteret* and by Andrew Thornton on 14 July at Pea Island NWR. Sadly, two accepted (on eBird) as photographed at Jordan Lake on 2 June appear to be Lesser Scaups; hopefully, this report can be deleted or corrected.

Lesser Scaup: Seldom reported in summer away from tidal water, noteworthy in NC were singles photographed at Everett Sod Farm *Transylvania* on 4 June (Nathaniel Axtell) and at a pond in *Franklin* also on 4 June (Rebekah Boan).

Common Eider: An immature male lingered near the Duck *Dare* NC pier for much of the summer (m. obs.). Even more unusual was an eider much farther south at Wrightsville Beach *New Hanover* NC, where seen on 12 June by Curtis Krueger and photographed on the following day by Sam Cooper.

Surf Scoter: As usual, as few individuals lingered along a part of the Carolina coast into summer. Most notable was a male on the beach at Kiawah Island *Charleston* SC, as photographed by Nicole-Marie Pettinelli on 28 June; she had seen three birds with Black Scoters there on 21 June. One if not two others were photographed farther north in that county at Crab Bank Island on 23 June (Jennifer Jerome, Jane Settle) and at Lighthouse Inlet Heritage Preserve on 10 July (Tom Lubeck).

Black Scoter: Many birds lingered along the coast of both states, in some places in low double digits. Slightly inland was a female seen at the western end of the Alligator River bridge *Tyrrell* NC on 14 June by Zane Fish.

Bufflehead: Unlike most other diving ducks, lingering Buffleheads seldom are found along the coast in summer, but instead seem to linger at a few lakes farther inland. This season there were singles photographed in NC near Glenville *Jackson* on 16 July (Emily Reasor) and at Lake James *McDowell* on the same date (Art Webster); a male with an injured wing was seen at Salem Lake *Forsyth* on 3 June (Emily Read).

Hooded Merganser: There were many reports across the inner portions of NC and SC, and likely some of these represented nesting birds. However, the NC Bird Atlas website does not show any confirmed nesting reports for 2024.

Common Merganser: This species surprisingly continues to increase in sightings from NC rivers in the mountains and foothills, where breeding is being confirmed at many sites. Breeding this summer was confirmed (on the NC Bird Atlas) at the Toe River *Yancey* (Debbie Segal) and at Lake Adger *Polk* (m. obs.); at least eight young were reported from this last site. Very rare into the upper Piedmont was a presumed nesting at the Raven Knob Scout Reservation *Surry*, where Brandon Trentler photographed nine on 12 July.

Red-breasted Merganser: As with the Black Scoter, this diving duck routinely lingers along the coast, often in double-digit numbers. Most notable was a "freshwater" female seen at Lake Moultrie *Berkeley* SC on 11 June by Carl Bussells.

Ruddy Duck: Two far inland reports were notable at this season – one photographed at Ninety Six National Historic Site *Greenwood* SC on 9 June by Chris Contakos and four photographed at Lake Julian *Buncombe* NC on the same date by Jay Wherley.

Ruffed Grouse: Reports of this species seem to be on the slow decline, though the species was reported from most of NC's 17 mountain counties that fully lie within the province. However, males drum mostly in the spring, and again in fall, and broods seem to be more often observed later in July or August than in June into mid-July. Certainly, trends in this game species are better detected by methods other than eBird reports.

Eurasian Collared-Dove: The species is slowly covering most of the Carolinas, though it is essentially still absent from the far northern NC mountains and northern Piedmont, including the Triangle area (*Orange*, *Durham*, and *Wake*) and areas eastward to Kitty Hawk *Dare*. Nonetheless, over most of the inland counties it is still rather rare or very localized.

Common Ground Dove: All summer reports were from SC, as expected, as the species breeds sparingly in the southern and southeastern parts of the state. North of the breeding range were one photographed on 5 June in *Chesterfield* by Graham Norman, and another photographed by Steve Patterson and Norman in *Kershaw* on 12 July.

White-winged Dove: This dove is an occasional visitor, mostly to the coast. This summer, Daniel Irons photographed one at Cape Hatteras point on 6 June, this or another was photographed on 15 June on Ocracoke Island by Stefany Boleyn, and likely a different one was photographed much farther south at Sneads Ferry *Onslow* on 1 June by Gilbert Grant. The lone SC report on eBird was one photographed at Sullivan's Island *Charleston* from 20-22 June by Elizabeth Anderegg.

Black-billed Cuckoo: One photographed and heard singing at Long Shoal River *Hyde* NC on 4 June (Eric Cormier, Joshua Emm) was rare and at an odd locale. Another was recorded singing at Maury *Greene* NC on 15 June by Trevor Sleight, presumably a late migrant as well. There were roughly eight summer records from the NC mountains, where it is a rare and sporadic breeder; reports came from *Alleghany* southwest to *Haywood*, though some could refer to wandering individuals.

Common Nighthawk: Though the species was reported from three NC mountain locales, none contained details (as it is shockingly not an eBird write-in); the species is not thought to nest in the mountains, and perhaps is also lacking now as a breeder in the western Piedmont. This season there were a few Piedmont reports west to Winston-Salem (m. obs.) and Salisbury *Rowan* (Joe Poston). Most Carolina nestings nowadays are in the Coastal Plain, mainly the Sandhills region and near the coast, places where the birds can hide nests in sandy soil under bushes to lessen nest predation by crows.

Chuck-will's-widow: The breeding range in the mountains is poorly known, so summer reports for *Swain*, *Clay* (two), and *Cherokee* suggest at least a small population in the lower elevations in the southwestern part of NC.

King Rail: Kevin Kubach and several others reported up to five birds at a marsh in northern *Anderson* SC much of the summer; nesting must certainly be taking place there. Also well inland in that state, Steve Murkowski heard two calling at Santee NWR – Bluff Unit *Clarendon* on 14 June. In NC, in addition to many coastal reports, one was reported (but without details) at the Voice of America Game Land *Beaufort* on two dates; nesting is likely there as well, owing to an extensive area of open moist ground.

Virginia Rail: Sadly, there were no well inland reports this season on eBird. However, one responding to a tape seemed a bit far inland for the coastal breeding population, where noted along the Pungo River west of Belhaven *Beaufort* NC on 28 July by Evan Miller.

Sora: A presumed very late migrant was photographed by Steve Patterson at a dairy pond at Clemson *Pickens* SC on 3 June. One was seen and described at Pea Island NWR on 8 June by Matt Crisler, also a presumed late migrant. Nesting is not known for the Carolinas.

Common Gallinule: Perhaps a new breeding locale in interior NC was the observing of six birds at a millpond near Bladenboro *Bladen* on 10 July by Silas Hernandez. A tally of 25 at White Oak River Impoundment *Onslow* on 28 July by Joshua Emm was one of the better ones in recent years.

American Coot: Lingering well inland were two seen by Karen Hogan and Teresa Noel on 7 June at Roanoke Rapids Lake NC and one to two on several July dates in *Lexington* SC by Zach Steinhauser.

Purple Gallinule: A very rare breeding record for NC was documented by many observers at Orton Pond *Brunswick*, where a pair was seen with several young, first observed on 14 July (Dave Hart). Well inland in SC, where uncertain if breeding, was one seen at Lake Moultrie at Bonneau *Berkeley* on 11 June (Carl Bussells) and one seen near Fairfax *Allendale* on 27 July (Cherrie Sneed, Alison Davies).

Black Rail: Sadly, there were no reports from the region this summer, but whether that indicates failures to hear any calling birds or simply that no one visited potential breeding marshes at night is not known. The subspecies in eastern North America is strongly declining and was declared as Federal Threatened in 2020.

Limpkin: On the other hand, this species has recently "invaded" the Carolinas and is sporadically nesting at a few SC sites. In NC, wandering individuals were photographed at River Road Park *New Hanover* on 19 July by Will Gibson, below the dam at Lake Waccamaw *Columbus* on 30 July by Silas Hernandez, and along the Pee Dee River *Stanly* on 11 July by Alden Early. In SC, Graham Norman noted two pairs at Sparkleberry Landing *Sumter* on 25 June, one to two birds were noted at Beidler Forest Sanctuary *Dorchester* from 1 June – 5 July (m. obs.), one was seen by Sally Siko at Conway *Horry* on 24 July, and one was seen at Savannah NWR on 27 June by Dave Spangenburg.

Sandhill Crane: One at Boiling Spring Lakes *Brunswick* NC on 3 June (Cynthia Lane) was apparently the female that attempted nesting there in 2023.

Black-necked Stilt: Two were again seen at Mattamuskeet NWR this season, on 9 July, by Harvey Clodfelter; breeding at this inland lake seems never to have been confirmed but is possible. As usual, the species was reported coastally and near the coast at numerous impoundments in both states, where nesting does take place.

American Avocet: A surprising flock of five birds put down at Grandmother Lake *Avery* NC, as photographed by Gordon Warburton on 4 July. Any montane record is unusual, especially at such a high elevation in the northern mountains.

Pacific Golden-Plover: Undoubtedly the same individual that has stopped in late summer annually since 2019 at Cape Hatteras point was first noted this summer on 7 July by Daniel Irons, who last reported it on 27 July.

Semipalmated Plover: Early southbound migrants began showing up inland in July, with an exceptional count of ten at Hooper Lane *Henderson* NC on 31 July (Tim Novak). Late lingering were six to eight at Lake Brandt *Guilford* NC on 2-3 June (Matt Wangerin et al.) and four noted by Kevin Kubach in *Fairfield* SC on 4 June.

Piping Plover: A good local breeding count for the southwestern tip of Ocracoke Island *Hyde* NC was 13, as tallied on 4 July by Matthew Janson. This Federally listed species breeds south essentially just to the central NC coast, sparingly farther south in that state.

Upland Sandpiper: Despite a dismal showing in spring, there were a good handful of late summer sightings of southbound migrants. Birds first showed up in NC at Pocosin Lakes NWR *Washington* on 22 July (Robert Lethco), at the Wilmington airport on 26 July (Sam Cooper), near Clinton *Sampson* on 27 July (Sharon Funderburk et al.), at Vandemark Farms *Nash* on 28 July (Alex Fuller), and at Hooper Lane *Henderson* on 31 July (Kevin Burke, m. obs.). In SC, a presumed very early migrant was heard calling and seen in flight by Steve Patterson on 25 June near Townville *Anderson*. Another in that state was photographed on 27 July at Nimmer Turf Farm *Jasper* by Tammy Hester.

Long-billed Curlew: Always a good find, though one to several do overwinter in a few coastal sites, singles this summer were seen well in flight by Andrew Thornton at Pea Island NWR on 18 July and photographed by Camille Duquet at Edingsville Beach *Colleton* SC on 24 July.

Marbled Godwit: There were dozens of coastal reports in both states for June and July, seemingly many more than usual. Do some birds not leave for their interior breeding grounds at all?

Ruddy Turnstone: One seen at Belhaven *Beaufort* NC on 1 June by Zane Fish seemed a bit far inland for a "coastal" bird.

Ruff: One, perhaps an adult female, was photographed at Pea Island NWR on 8 July by Zachary Gavett and Brianna D'Amato. NC gets fewer than one record a year for this Eurasian stray.

Stilt Sandpiper: One photographed at Lake Brandt *Guilford* by Matt Wangerin and Heather Buttonow on 7 July was very early inland; two were slightly early on 31 July at Hooper Lane (m. obs.).

Baird's Sandpiper: Only about the fourth spring record for the NC Coastal Plain was one photographed on the late date of 1 June by Stephen Davies at Pea Island NWR. Just as unusual in SC was another photographed at Bear Island WMA *Colleton* on 13 June by Mac McCall, John Patten Moss, and others; it remained to 15 June (Tom Austin).

White-rumped Sandpiper: This is a late spring migrant, and birds are often still passing northward into early June. Notably late were two at a pond near Chapel Hill *Orange* NC from 8-10 June (Kent Fiala et al.); one on 7 June near Townville *Anderson* SC (Steve Patterson, Brad Dalton) was also rather late.

Pectoral Sandpiper: Perhaps owing to a severe drought across the region in the first half of July, many reservoirs were quite low and showing extensive mudflats. Notable numbers of this species on such mudflats included up to 11 at Mountain Creek Park *Catawba* NC on 23 July (m. obs.) and as many as 20 at Jordan Lake *Chatham* on 17 July (Ron Martin, Mark Montazer et al.). Large numbers also appeared at several turf farms, highlighted by as many as 45 near Clinton NC on 27 July (Joshua Emm, Eric Cormier), 35 at the Leggett Sod Farm *Edgecombe* NC on 28 July (Alex Fuller), and 16 at Vandemark Farms from 21-30 July (Alex Fuller et al.). In far western SC, the best count was 24 at an arm of Lake Hartwell *Anderson* on 27 July (Brian Barchus).

Short-billed Dowitcher: There were quite a few inland records in July, perhaps owing to more mudflats for birds to put down on for foraging. However, all reports from the two states inland were of just one or two birds.

American Woodcock: This species breeds over most of the region though it is not well known as a nester near the coast. One seen in flight at dusk at Alligator River NWR on 27 July by Sarah Toner and Larry Chen was notable.

Wilson's Snipe: Very late in departing was one carefully studied by Zane Fish at a pond at Leasburg *Person* NC on 7 June.

Wilson's Phalarope: Always a good find in summer was one a bit early photographed by Karen Lebing at Pea Island NWR on 13 July. Even more exciting was a presumed late northbound bird photographed by Matt Rivers at Huntington Beach SP on 2 June.

Wilson's Phalarope, 13 Jul 2024, Dare County, NC. Photograph by Karen Lebing.

Red-necked Phalarope: A few were spotted coastally during the summer. One lingered at Pea Island NWR from 4-6 July (Heather Buttonow et al.); three were seen from a boat off Cape Lookout *Carteret* NC on 1 June (Caleb Bronsink); and one was photographed at Pawleys Island *Georgetown* SC on 28 July (Jay Gamble, Michelle Gamble).

South Polar Skua: Quite rare was one well photographed from land at Cape Hatteras point on 30 June by Jesse Haaf and Chris Haaf. In the Gulf Stream off that cape, Daniel Irons saw single birds on 5 June, 22 June, 26 June, and 29 July on fishing trips.

Parasitic Jaeger: Rather unusual in midsummer along the coast were two photographed by Martin Wall at Fort Macon SP *Carteret* NC on 20 June. At a more predictable onshore site, seven birds were tallied by Daniel Irons at Cape Hatteras point on 21 June. A few were also seen on fishing and birding trips into the nearby Gulf Stream during the period (Brian Patteson, Daniel Irons).

Long-tailed Jaeger: Rare from shore was one photographed by Daniel Irons at Cape Hatteras point on 21 June. He saw another on a fishing trip off that cape on 29 June.

Bonaparte's Gull: Quite late in departing were singles photographed by Tim Foley at Wrightsville Beach on 3 June and another lingering at Huntington Beach SP from 2-9 June, as found by Matt Rivers and others.

Laughing Gull: Quite rare in summer well inland were one photographed at Ecusta Pond *Transylvania* NC on 6 June (Nathaniel Axtell et al.), another photographed at Lake Norman *Mecklenburg* NC on 9 June (Jeff Lemons party), and a notable three seen at Lake Hartwell overlook *Anderson* on 5 June (Steve Patterson).

Heermann's Gull: One spent much of the summer lingering around the Hatteras Inlet/Hatteras village area, first being noted on 21 June and seen to the end of July (m. obs.). Whether this was the same adult as seen along the NC coast in previous years is open to question.

Ring-billed Gull: One seen at Lake James *Burke* NC on 9 June by Alex Trifunovic was quite late in departing for a foothills locale.

Iceland Gull: Remarkably late in departing was an immature photographed by Sam Cooper at the north end of Wrightsville Beach NC on 21 June. The individual seen at the Alligator River bridge *Tyrrell* NC in late May was last noted on 2 June (Lucas Wilson, Lydia Pultorak).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: This ever-increasing species was not reported away from tidal water this season, but birds lingered/remained coastally as far south as *Georgetown* SC. Certainly now some birds simply choose to spend the summer in the Carolinas, though of course there is no evidence of breeding anywhere this far south on the continent.

Brown Noddy: Generating much excitement as a lifer or state bird, as it spent several days literally on the coastline instead of well offshore as normal, a noddy was photographed along the beach and surf a few miles north of Buxton *Dare* from 16-24 June (Michael Gosselin, Megan Baker et al.). It even perched on a balcony of a beach house!

Brown Noddy, 23 Jun 2024, Dare County, NC. Photograph by Bob Lewis.

Sooty Tern: None were reported from shore this season, but Daniel Irons frequently saw them on fishing boats well off Cape Hatteras from 20-31 July, with a peak of 50 on 22 July.

Bridled Tern: Only a few single birds were seen on boat trips off Cape Hatteras this season; however, numbers typically increase in August.

Least Tern: There were quite a few far inland records for the summer, highlighted by a stunning 12 photographed at Maxton *Robeson* NC on 8 July by Rachel Wood. Singles were noted at Lake Brandt *Guilford* on 16 June (Elizabeth Link, Linda Sumner et al.) and at Blewett Falls Lake *Richmond* NC on 19 June (Lucas Wilson). Up to 12 continued around Greenville NC this season (Joe Weiss, Stacy Weiss); though nesting has yet to be reported there, one must wonder if a small colony was nearby. In inland SC, Matt Rivers saw 12 on 19 June at Lake Wallace *Marlboro* and four at Business Pond in *Dillon* on 11 July. As many as three were noted at Camden *Kershaw* from 5-9 June (Maria Lauricella, Michelle Wilcox). None of these reports were in association with any named tropical system, though this species is normally absent on such lakes unless there are severe storms that carry birds or force birds down to them.

Caspian Tern: A few individuals of this species were seen on far inland lakes this season, mainly in the latter part of July, but only in small numbers (three or fewer).

Black Tern: Surprisingly, there were no reports (from named birders) for any well inland site in July, but thankfully numbers seem to be somewhat improving along the coast, especially in July for these early southbound migrants.

Roseate Tern: This formerly quite rare migrant and summer visitant has seemingly increased, at least along the NC Outer Banks. Small numbers, mostly up to three birds, were noted in much of June and July from Oregon Inlet to Cape Hatteras point, and also around Hatteras Inlet; most were found by Daniel Irons. Quite rare for *Carteret* were three photographed at Fort Macon SP on 19 June by David Fischer and Martin Wall.

Common Tern: Heather Buttonow photographed two at Lake Townsend *Guilford* NC on 15 July, always a good inland find in summer. Another tern well inland was one photographed by John Becker at Lake Marion *Clarendon* SC on 9 July. Birds were reported all along the coast this summer, but information on breeding colonies was not available; the species is showing a concerning decline as a breeder in the Carolinas over the last decade or two.

Arctic Tern: Very rare for *Carteret* was one photographed sitting on the beach at Fort Macon SP on 3 June by Ann Stinely, Lisa Tucci, and Martin Wall. Somewhat more expected were two photographed on a pelagic trip off Hatteras Inlet on 2 June (Brian Patteson and party).

Forster's Tern: A scattering of this species was seen on inland lakes, mainly in July, as were many seen far up estuarine rivers in eastern NC. This species nests in coastal and estuarine marshes and thus is difficult to determine exactly where breeding sites are located, and how far upriver these sites are present.

Red-throated Loon: Very late in departing was one seen by Jeremy Braun from the Duck Research Pier *Dare* on 28 June.

Common Loon: Nonbreeding loons frequently remain into the summer season in the Carolinas, usually along the coast. Quite unusual in the higher mountains was one photographed by Beth Pearson at Lake Glenville *Jackson* NC on 20 June.

Leach's Storm-Petrel: The only reports for the season were from the Cape Hatteras area – one seen from Cape Point on 20 June by Daniel Irons, and a peak tally well off that cape of 21 on 2 June (Seabirding Inc.). That latter group recorded the species on four dates from 1-8 June.

Trindade Petrel: There was a single sighting off Hatteras Inlet this summer, one on 1 June (Seabirding Inc.).

Bermuda Petrel: Always the rarest of the four "regular" *Pterodroma* species (Black-capped, Trindade, Fea's, and Bermuda) in our region, one was an exciting find off Hatteras Inlet on 2 June (Seabirding Inc.).

Black-capped Petrel: John Becker photographed one about 45 miles southeast of Little River Inlet SC on 16 July, the only summer report away from the usual feeding grounds in the Gulf Stream out from Cape Hatteras.

Cory's Shearwater: There were many more coastal reports than usual this summer, as this species is not easily observed from beaches. One observed in Roanoke Sound, as seen from the US 64 bridge on 29 June by Jesse Haaf, was unusually far inland. A beach watch at Cape Hatteras point by Daniel Irons produced an excellent tally of 507 birds on 21 June.

Scopoli's Shearwater: This recently-split species (from Cory's Shearwater) was photographed "approximately 45 miles SE of Little River Inlet" on a fishing trip out of *Georgetown* SC; John Becker posted a photo on his eBird list from 16 July. Though there are a large number of photos now for this "new" species off the NC coast, this might be an important documentary photo for SC – assuming the location is indeed in SC waters.

Sooty Shearwater: The poor northbound migration of this abundant species continued into early June, with no tallies along or off the coast into double digits. Presumably the northbound movement off the East Coast this spring was farther to the east than usual.

Great Shearwater: There was little or no major die-off of this species reported along the beaches this summer, unlike in some previous summers, though August reports are not yet available. However, there were many more coastal observations of presumably healthy birds than normal. The best tally from Cape Hatteras point was 166 counted by Daniel Irons on 21 June.

Manx Shearwater: A few individuals linger in NC waters into the summer, and this season one was noted off Cape Hatteras on 3 June (Seabirding Inc.). A few were seen from shore at Cape Hatteras point from 17-25 June, with a peak of three on 17 June (Daniel Irons).

Sargasso Shearwater: Formerly named as Audubon's Shearwater, the highest offshore count this season was 47 off Hatteras Inlet on 2 June (Seabirding Inc.).

Wood Stork: A flock of 15 seen in flight near Charlotte on 6 July by Chris Huffstickler was quite a high count for the Piedmont. One to two in *Anderson* SC on 28-29 July (Mark Songer, John Koon) were also far to the west. There were many more reports over the region from the SC Coastal Plain north to *Bladen* NC than normal. Most exciting was a new(?) very large colony of breeding storks at a private pond in southern *Bladen*, where 200+ nests and 550 birds were reported by Silas Hernandez on 10 July.

Magnificent Frigatebird: There were roughly five to six coastal reports for each state this season, about typical in recent years.

Masked Booby: The only report for the summer was one seen by Daniel Irons off of Hatteras Inlet on 26 June.

Brown Booby: This species is increasing as a visitor in the region. Always noteworthy inland was one that perhaps made a short stay at the Short Stay Recreation Area on the east side of Lake Moultrie SC, as photographed by Matt Johnson on 22 June. A coastal booby in that state was at Charleston on 11 June (Pamela Ford, Craig Watson). In NC were singles reported on a boat trip off Beaufort Inlet *Carteret* on 22 June (Caleb Bronsink) and from a cruise ship well off Cape Hatteras on 22 June (Mike Farnworth).

Anhinga: The farthest inland breeding ever reported in NC was a nest with adults at Mosquito Den Swamp *Lincoln* in June and July (m. obs.). Another Piedmont nesting in that state's Piedmont was in *Nash* along Sapony Creek, where Alicia Bachman observed a few nests and 13 birds on 1 May. The species was reported so often throughout most of the region that eBird reviewers are probably tired of reviewing this species! A rough tally of 50+ nests and 120 birds were observed by Silas Hernandez at the private pond in *Bladen* (mentioned above) on 10 July, possible the largest nesting colony in the state now.

Great Cormorant: Late in departing was one photographed in the water at Fort Macon SP on 2 June by Ann Stinely.

Double-crested Cormorant: A long belated (overlooked?) report of nesting in NC was about 80 birds seen on nests on an island in Badin Lake *Stanly* on 19 Apr 2021 by Martina Nordstrand. Cormorants continued to nest at Edenton *Chowan* for at least the second summer; Kathy Miller saw nearly 100 birds on nests in four trees in May and June 2023-2024. Also belated was the reporting of at least 10 pairs at a colony on a dredge island just west of Oregon Inlet, on 18 Jul 2023 by David Allen. All of these data are from the NC Bird Atlas.

Neotropic Cormorant: What appears to be the third NC record was one photographed by Mark DiGiovanni at a fishing pond near Hallsboro *Columbus* on 15 June. This report has not yet been reviewed by the NC BRC.

American White Pelican: A flock of 30 birds photographed at Bogue Inlet *Carteret* NC on 25 June by James Allen was an unusual number for that site. Some pelicans were reported from essentially all of SC's coastal counties this summer.

Brown Pelican: The only well inland individuals were a few seen during the season at Lake Moultrie, with a peak of six on 20 July (Kathy Hart).

American Bittern: One flushed and then seen well in flight by Mike Resch was very unusual on 21 July at Hooper Lane *Henderson.* There were scattered sightings in eastern NC this summer; one or two sites might represent breeding locales, though no record contained any evidence of nesting. However, there were scattered records of up to two from May-July around the Cape Hatteras point ponds that suggest that breeding might have taken place there.

Least Bittern: The only well inland summer records this year were a few around the margins of Lake Marion and Lake Moultrie. There were quite a few reports in the

Tidewater region of NC, as far inland as the Voice of America Game Land *Beaufort*. A tally of 13 at Point of Marsh (military restricted zone) *Carteret* on 18 June by Eric Cormier and Joshua Emm was outstanding.

Little Blue Heron: A perhaps new nesting site was noted by Silas Hernandez in southern *Bladen* on 13 July, with estimates of 30+ nests and 80 birds in total. Owing to the heat and drought starting in mid-June and continuing well into July, large numbers of this species, mostly immatures as usual, moved to the mudflats and shallow waters of the many lakes and ponds across the region.

Tricolored Heron: This species only sparingly moves inland after breeding, but as usual there were a good handful of inland reports, the farthest west being one at Mountain Creek Park *Catawba* NC from 22-25 July (Paige Martin et al.).

Reddish Egret: The usual handful of post-breeding stragglers (from Florida) made their way northward to coastal sites. In addition to the usual bird at Sunset Beach *Brunswick*, the farthest north was one seen by Martin Wall at the east end of Shackleford Banks *Carteret* on 29 July.

Snowy Egret: Many individuals moved inland after nesting, across the Piedmont region; the only mountain report was as many as four present at Hooper Lane from 25-31 July (Mike Resch et al.).

Yellow-crowned Night Heron: This uncommon species appears to be increasing as a breeder into the western Coastal Plain and Piedmont of NC. In addition to continued colonies in Charlotte, Winston-Salem, Greensboro, and Durham—Chapel Hill, a few apparently nested at Rhodes Pond *Cumberland* (Yvonne Porter) and along the South River near Wade *Cumberland* (Joshua Emm). The species nests at other places in the Carolinas closer to the coast, but mainly in somewhat remote swamps where confirming breeding can be difficult. In addition to breeding birds, scattered immatures were even seen in the NC mountains at Hayesville *Clay* on 18 July (Rolando Willimann), Pigeon River at Canton *Haywood* on 14 July (Lydia Pultorak, Lucas Wilson), and a handful of sites in *Buncombe, Transylvania*, and *Henderson.*

Black-crowned Night Heron: At Lake Twitty *Union* NC, where breeding was confirmed in 2022, Dennis Kent again noted birds for the fourth consecutive summer, finding three (two adults and one undetermined) on 9 July. There were a good handful of other inland reports, essentially of post-breeding birds, but most unusual were five – two adults and three immatures – photographed together at Dobbins Farm near Townville SC on 17 July by George McHenry.

Western Cattle-Egret: The major heronry in southern *Bladen* also contained a huge number of nests of this local species – roughly 200 nests and 600 birds – as estimated by Silas Hernandez on 13 July. Smaller numbers of both Great Egrets and Great Blue Herons were also nesting there. Do these large numbers at this seemingly new site indicate that one or two other inland colony sites have failed and/or been abandoned? At any rate, there are numerous millponds, beaver ponds, and other lakes and ponds in the

Coastal Plain of the Carolinas where colonial waterbirds can become established, and such wetlands seem to be increasing in number. A few post-breeding or wandering Cattle Egrets were reported well inland, with the farthest inland in NC being three in *Cleveland* from 4-6 July (Bill Hooker et al.), and in SC being up to five in the Townville area from 4 June – 26 July (George McHenry et al.).

Great Blue Heron (white form/subspecies): Presumably the same "Great White Heron" that has visited the northern mountains in the last year or two returned to a wetland park in Newland *Avery* NC; it was noted from 13-28 July by Jack Rogers and many others. This might be the same bird as photographed earlier on 9 June in Burnsville *Yancey* by Catherine Reid.

White Ibis: As with the Little Blue Heron, moderate numbers of post-breeding birds moved far inland; nearly all were immatures as usual. Staggering numbers were at Jordan Lake in July, with a peak of 114 tallied on 19 July by Spike Millington. Quite far inland was one seen by Drake Fowler at Andrews *Cherokee* NC on 7 July, and one to two at Boone *Watauga* were notable at that fairly high elevation town from 12-18 July (Steve Dowlan, Guy McGrane et al.).

Glossy Ibis: This species might be showing a small increase near the coast as a breeder, after a number of years in decreased numbers from 30 or more years ago. No birds dispersed into the Piedmont this season; two at a turf farm near Clinton *Sampson* NC on 27 July (Eric Cormier, Joshua Emm) were noteworthy. Also notable were four at a flooded field in southern *Halifax* NC on 28 July (Alex Fuller); perhaps these were part of a large flock of 13 at another sod farm at nearby Leggett *Edgecombe* on 30 July (Ron Martin).

Roseate Spoonbill: Numbers and reports continue to increase along the coast, especially in SC. Far inland in that state were one noted by Cheryl Gibisch in *Anderson* on 9 July, one noted by Jerry Griggs in *Lexington* on 25 July, and the usual group at Silver Bluff sanctuary *Aiken*, with a peak of five noted by Gary Bunker and others from 22 June – 6 July. In NC, besides the handful along the southernmost coast, inland reports were three at Jordan Lake from 9-23 July (Spike Millington et al.), one at Lake Townsend *Guilford* on 26 July (Emily Clancy), one in *Iredell* on 30 July (Bill Hooker, Anita Hooker, Paige Martin), and one in *Mecklenburg* on 20 July (Greg Hays).

Roseate Spoonbills (with Little Blue Heron in background), 13 Jun 2024, Chatham County, NC. Photograph by Ian McDonald.

Swallow-tailed Kite: This species is also increasing in the region and is probably breeding now at a few more sites in NC than currently known (about four-five locales at most). Post-breeding birds made it throughout SC, but in NC they were limited to just *Polk*, where one to two were noted from 4-29 July by G. Ivey and others.

Northern Harrier: There were no summer reports for SC, but a few were seen as usual near the NC coast, where a few pairs nest – though no report suggested breeding evidence. Quite early as a southbound migrant (presumably) was one noted by Jay Lanier on 28 July at Hooper Lane *Henderson.*

Sharp-shinned Hawk: An exciting find was a nest containing two juveniles found in a Red Spruce at Grandfather Mountain *Watauga* by Ron Boling on 11 July. In addition, Alex Lowe-Massi noted begging calls heard from a presumed nest on Roan Mountain *Mitchell* on 19 July. Though the species does nest sparingly in the NC mountains, actual nesting evidence is sparse. Otherwise, there were a number of summer sightings in that state's mountains and a few eastward to *Cumberland* (where nesting is unlikely).

Cooper's Hawk: Certainly increasing as a breeder across the region, there were a remarkable number of sightings just from the barrier islands south to Ocracoke Island NC. Such sightings were also quite numerous all along the SC coast.

Mississippi Kite: Another increasing species in the region, these kites continue to breed at new sites in both states. An adult carrying a stick was nesting evidence seen on 20 May by Alicia Bachman in southwestern *Anson*, a new nesting locale. Also seemingly new was an active nest found in Hillsborough *Orange* in June by Nan Dewire and Curtis Brooks.

Broad-winged Hawk: Breeding by this species in the Coastal Plain and much of the Piedmont is spotty and probably getting spottier (i.e., declining). Two adults photographed at Chocowinity *Beaufort* NC on 6 July (Daniel Irons) are intriguing. There were a fair number of such reports of single birds, some possibly just Red-shouldered Hawks, but others possibly were wandering Broad-wingeds.

American Barn Owl: There were disturbingly just two reports for the Carolinas in the June-July period, both in NC: one seen at 3:04 am near Plymouth *Washington* on 17 July by Evan Miller, and one photographed by Eric Cormier during daylight near Clinton *Sampson* on 14 June. Cormier went back to the farm where he had the owl in June and was able to photograph three birds inside a barn on 3 July, essentially confirming nesting there.

Eastern Screech-Owl: The NC Bird Atlas field work was presumably the reason for many, many dozens of reports of this secretive species in June-July! Though the species has clearly declined over much or nearly all of the Carolinas in recent decades, one would not know that by the eBird map. However, reports were disturbingly few over most of the NC Piedmont except in the southern counties east of Charlotte.

Northern Saw-whet Owl: Most of the calling records for this species in the NC mountains occurred in the spring, when birds are more vocal. One was reported at Unaka Mountain Road on that mountain in *Mitchell* NC on 8 June (Roy Knispel, Joe McGuiness); this mountain straddles the Tennessee state line, but it contains a considerable amount of spruce forests and thus the owl is expected there.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Breeding evidence was reported in the far southern NC mountains near Franklin *Macon*, where Jack Rogers and Emily Reasor saw five recently fledged young on 29 June. At nearby Rainbow Springs, Alex Trifunovic and Myra Kinkaid found an active nest on 29 June.

Red-cockaded Woodpecker: Though there were numerous reports from both Carolinas at usual breeding areas, there seem to have been no sightings from semi-new locales, such as between the NC Sandhills population and the coastal one.

Merlin: The continued summer presence of a few Merlins in the northern NC mountains continued into 2024. Near West Jefferson *Ashe*, LynnErla Beegle saw and heard a calling bird on 11 July; one was present in that area in summer 2023. Singles were seen at Carvers Gap at Roan Mountain *Mitchell* on 12 July by Adrianna Nelson and at Mount Mitchell *Yancey* on 1 July by Debbie Segal. Farther south in that state's mountains, singles were also notable in summer at Mount Pisgah *Transylvania* on 4 July (Michele Hathcock), at Flat Laurel Branch *Haywood* on 26 June (Chris Kelly), and at Ecusta Pond *Transylvania* on 18 July (Michael Plauche). Except for the last site, these other five locales are in fairly high mountains, and local breeding cannot be excluded, as breeding has been confirmed in the northern mountains a few years ago.

Peregrine Falcon: This falcon is a well-known breeder in the NC mountains, and there were about 20 eBird seasonal reports there. Of the reports far into the Piedmont or Coastal Plain, the most notable was an immature seen chasing shorebirds at a turf farm near Clinton NC on 26 July (Ron Martin).

Monk Parakeet: Where did the two birds seen and photographed at McDowell Prairie *Mecklenburg* from 17-23 June (Benjamin Lu et al.) come from?! They presumably were escapees from somewhere in nearby Charlotte.

Gray Kingbird: The only rare kingbird species reported during the summer was a single Gray at Bear Island WMA *Colleton* SC from 4-8 June, as found by Matt Rivers and others. Though the species occasionally nests along the SC coast, there was no evidence of breeding seen at the reported location.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: Technically a kingbird(!), the continuing nesting pair at the York SC airport produced at least four young this season (m. obs.). Single non-breeders were found in NC in *Lincoln* on 8 June (Thea Sinclair), at Winston-Salem on 10 June (Tricia Gardner), and photographed at Scranton *Hyde* on 4 June (Joshua Emm).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, 27 Jun 2024, York, SC. Photograph by John Long.

Willow Flycatcher: One photographed and heard singing was certainly a late migrant in downtown Raleigh on 13 June (Christopher Moxley), as was one seen and heard calling in western Raleigh on 9 June (Brian O'Shea). Also considered a late migrant were individuals in *Alamance* on 2 June (Jeffrey Greco), Guilford County Farm on 1-2 June (Charles Tysinger), and Yadkinville Community Park *Yadkin* on 3 June (Jack Rogers). The species does nest at nearby Winston-Salem and across that state's mountains and nearby foothills.

Least Flycatcher: This species was reported in most NC mountain counties, where it nests; the only other report was a migrant noted singing near Lincolnton NC on 14 June by Alex Lowe-Massi.

Eastern Phoebe: For whatever reason, large numbers of phoebes were reported in June and July along and near the NC coast, though no breeding evidence was reported for them. Do some non-breeders remain coastally all summer, or are these early or late migrants that perhaps nested within 100 miles?

Blue-headed Vireo: This species breeds eastward into the Sandhills region, especially in NC. Though there were a good handful of summer reports for the central Carolinas, very few had any details at all, as the eBird filters are soft and the species is not a write-in where it really should be. Thus, breeding evidence was essentially not mentioned, such as whether birds were singing on territory or not.

Warbling Vireo: One singing along a greenway near Garner *Wake* NC on 6-7 June (Brian O'Shea) was somewhat out of breeding range. However, not too far to the west the one to two singing birds from the spring season at the Cape Fear River in southeastern *Chatham* remained at least to 20 July and possibly attempted nesting (Ron Martin et al.).

There were numerous other reports for the central and western NC Piedmont as well, where breeding does take place at scattered sites, in addition to some mountain locales.

Black-whiskered Vireo: The singing bird reported in May along the central Outer Banks *Dare* remained at the golf course in Nags Head until 10 June (m. obs.).

Loggerhead Shrike: This slowly declining species was reported through SC except for the mountains, and in NC sparingly over the southwestern two-thirds of the Piedmont and the western two-thirds of the Coastal Plain, east to Pinetown *Beaufort* (Eric Cormier). The great number of reports from *Edgecombe* and *Martin* southwest to the SC state line might suggest a slight increase in breeding birds in that region, though birding effort and volume are unknown and might be the reason for this high frequency.

Fish Crow: Ever spreading into the mountains, it is definitely nesting in a few of them (*Watauga, Buncombe*, and likely others), and might well be doing so in most of the 17 NC counties fully within the region. This was a scarce visitor to the region ten years ago.

Common Raven: Raven sightings extended east to *Vance, Wake*, and *Union* in NC; nesting does occur sparingly at a few quarry sites, but the species is so secretive that obtaining breeding evidence (for such a large bird) is difficult without large and easily visible cliffs and quarry ledges being present. A few reached the SC Piedmont, but only east to *Cherokee* and *Anderson.*

Horned Lark: There was a complete lack of any summer report in NC west of *Surry* and *Cleveland*, and in the SC Piedmont east of *Anderson*. The species does continue to do well as a breeder in the central and western NC Coastal Plain, and slightly less so in this same zone in SC.

Bank Swallow: Birds were reported in both June (late northbound migrants) and again in the latter half of July (southbound migrants) across both states, but there were no large concentrations, nor any signs of breeding. The species formerly bred at a few NC sites but presumably no longer nests in NC now. There is an identification issue with this species, as some juvenile Tree Swallows, especially in July, have been called as Bank Swallows (based on photo review), and a few reports on eBird likely refer to juvenile Trees or perhaps Northern Rough-wingeds.

Tree Swallow: This species continues to greatly increase as a breeder, at least in NC. It now appears to be nesting across the Piedmont (and mountains), and in much of the Coastal Plain south to *Cumberland, Wayne*, and *Carteret*, and sparingly at least around Wilmington. The breeding range into SC is muddled, as extremely few of the many reports contained comments, and their Breeding Bird Atlas was just from 1988-1995.

Cliff Swallow: There were dozens of Carolina records this summer, including many of nesting sites. The species continues its odd "coastal" breeding distribution, with numerous colonies in the *Craven* and *Carteret* region, but nothing resembling nesting reports in the northeastern counties nor southward! Most notable was a small nesting site

at Pantego *Beaufort* NC, as reported by Lydia Pultorak on 1 June, with five birds on occupied nests.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: There were two intriguing summer reports from the higher mountains of NC, where nesting is not known. One was seen well at Mount Mitchell SP on 4 July by Krista Kelly and Kristin Hillegas. Another was singing at Wine Spring Bald *Macon* on 18 June, as reported by John DeLuca et al.

Cedar Waxwing: This species has a sporadic and unpredictable breeding range east of the mountains. Silas Hernandez saw adults carrying nesting material on 21 May in far-eastern Kelly *Bladen* NC, and farther east Evan Miller saw two adults nest-building on 7 June near Pinetown *Beaufort*. Lydia Pultorak also saw a pair nest-building on 11 June at Roper *Washington*. Based on past knowledge, these nesting locales are presumed one-time-only events.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: The individual that lingered all spring at Pete Rubinas' feeders in *Chatham* NC continued throughout the summer, at least to 28 July. This is an unprecedented occurrence.

Brown Creeper: This "boreal" species is likely slightly declining in the mountains as a breeder, though it was gratifying to see numerous reports in the Nantahala Mountains along the *Clay-Macon* line; and there was a summer report at a rather low elevation in *Graham* near Robbinsville on 12 June (Brian O'Shea).

Northern House Wren: The breeding status along the northern Outer Banks is unclear. A number of singing birds were noted this summer, and a few nests have been found in the past few years. Oddly, there seems to be a hiatus in breeders from there to *Beaufort, Craven*, and *Pamlico*.

Winter Wren: As with the Brown Creeper, this montane breeder seems to be on a slight decline perhaps owing to global warming and/or Eastern Hemlock decline. There were numerous summer reports, but not as many as in previous summers.

Marsh Wren: Though there were numerous coastal records, as usual, there were none along the coast between Cedar Island *Carteret* and the Wilmington area, and just one there and none farther south until Huntington Beach SC. Are Marsh Wrens absent as breeders in this extensive stretch, or simply were few people birding these places?

Swainson's Thrush: Sadly, the small breeding population in the NC higher mountains, a relatively recent occurrence, appears to be blinking out. The only summer report was a singing bird noted from 16-19 June by Seth Buddy at Laurel Gap Shelter in the Great Smoky Mountains NP *Haywood* NC.

Hermit Thrush: On the other hand, the breeding population of this thrush, not noted in the NC mountains until the late 1970's, continues to fare well, with numerous reports from *Ashe* south to *Swain*; two *Graham* reports lacked any details and seem to be at elevations too low for the species in summer.

Red Crossbill: In addition to the many NC mountain reports, two birds were photographed from the lookout at Caesars Head SP *Greenville* SC on 1 July by Matt Rivers and Mark Domincovich. As many as six crossbills were at the Walhalla State Fish Hatchery *Oconee* SC from 29 June – 22 July (Joe and Liz Dunkleman, Elizabeth Anderegg et al.). There were no reports from downstate regions.

Red Crossbill, 26 Jul 2024, Yancey County, NC. Photograph by Mark Thomas.

Pine Siskin: Though the species breeds in the higher NC mountains, breeding is more erratic than with Red Crossbill. One siskin was seen carrying food at Mount Mitchell SP on 13 July by Alex Lowe-Massi.

Bachman's Sparrow: Poorly known in NC between the Sandhills and coastal counties, two were heard singing midway between Jones Lake and White Lake in *Bladen* on 10 July by Lydia Pultorak. Another was noted at nearby Bay Tree Lake SP on 15 June by Larry Chen and Sarah Toner.

Grasshopper Sparrow: This species formerly bred across the northern mountains of NC in meadows, but it now is greatly reduced in numbers, though a few were reported in northern *Alleghany*. One singing at the *Chowan* airport on 19 Jul (Andrew Thornton) might be a new breeding locale. Other summer reports near the NC coast lacked details. In SC, the southernmost summer reports were from a turf farm in *Sumter* on 27 July (Graham Norman et al.) and *Kershaw* in June and July (Graham Norman).

Lark Sparrow: One to two birds continued at a drop zone in the Sandhills Game Land *Scotland* NC, where Jeff Beane and Stephanie Horton saw up to two birds throughout June. The species breeds there and at a few drop zones on nearby Fort Liberty and Camp Mackall. The only other regional report for the season was a stray/visitor photographed on 1 July by Matt Rivers and Mark Domincovich in *York* SC.

Clay-colored Sparrow: Completely out of season was one photographed at Moses Cone Park *Watauga* NC on 20 July by Corie Latta and Karen Szafrajda. A report from a feeder in *Mitchell* NC in June did not have a plumage description.

White-crowned Sparrow: Normally departing by early May and returning in late September or October, an adult photographed by Kristi Kelly and Kristin Hillegas on 14 July in Weaverville *Buncombe* NC defies explanation.

White-throated Sparrow: Every summer or two brings a report of a late-lingering member of this abundant species. Robert Rybczynski photographed one at a bird bath in his yard in Cary *Wake* NC on 23 June; and one was seen by Amy Schmidt in Charlotte on 7 June.

Vesper Sparrow: Sadly, this species is disappearing as a breeder from the NC mountains. Formerly uncommon and a bit local, there were just three summer reports: Elk Knob Game Land *Watauga*, Roan Mountain *Avery*, and Big Bald *Yancey* --- all known breeding sites.

Nelson's Sparrow: Late in departing was one seen on 1 June at Huntington Beach SP by Theo Bockhorst.

Savannah Sparrow: This sparrow was detected in summer at five to six sites in *Alleghany* NC (Tom McNeil), but it went unreported in *Ashe* and *Watauga*, where nesting used to occur (and probably still does). At a known breeding site far to the south was one photographed by Nathaniel Axtell on 7 June at the Hannah Ford bridge *Transylvania.*

Song Sparrow: Sadly, eBird reports are useless for determining the breeding range of this species in the Carolinas, owing to the species not being a "write-in" during June and July, and thus birders reporting the species are not required to provide details. This editor feels that most lower Coastal Plain reports are incorrect in June and July, outside the known breeding population along the Outer Banks south perhaps to *Carteret.* A bird appeared to be at a breeding site in southeastern *Pitt,* when seen and heard singing on several dates in June-July (Eric Cormier, Christine Stoughton Root).

Bobolink: An exciting find, likely indicative of local breeding, was five birds photographed singing near Amelia *Alleghany* NC on 16 June by Tom McNeil. The only breeding records came from the usual Bamboo *Watauga* area, where about five were reported on 1 June by David Gravermoen and Eden Isbell. There were four other downstate NC reports of migrants in June and July.

Orchard Oriole: This species was reported at a number of mid-elevation sites in the NC mountains, and even at one above 4,000 feet, but none had any details, as the species is not listed as rare in those counties. Nonetheless, the species is increasingly moving into higher elevations than from ten or more years ago, and the NC Bird Atlas does show confirmed nesting at sites above 3,000 feet, such as near Todd, Valle Crucis, and Boone.

Baltimore Oriole: This species breeds in the NC mountain valleys, and this season there were many reports south into *Henderson*. Sadly, most reports in counties west of that region lacked comments and were likely wandering birds or migrants, and nearly all of the numerous reports from the NC Piedmont and upper Coastal Plain lacked details. (A few birds sparingly nest in the central Piedmont, though there were no such reports in 2024.)

Ovenbird: Ovenbirds nest over most of the region but are absent along and very near the coast, at least in southern SC and far eastern NC. In the latter state, birds were reported in June-July in all counties except a few north of Albemarle Sound; birds are now present across mainland *Dare* and in *Brunswick*; however, a report from Nags Head on the Outer Banks lacked details and, if correct, was a late migrant.

Worm-eating Warbler: A good breeding record was of two adults feeding a young bird near Council *Bladen* on 30 June by Lydia Pultorak. This species does nest in this county and others from there toward the coast, and sparingly into eastern SC, in addition to the montane and upper Piedmont range. SC had a scattering of reports over the state, though many might relate to migrants or wandering birds.

Louisiana Waterthrush: As with the Ovenbird, this species breeds over most of the Carolinas except close to the coast but is notably much less numerous everywhere. Noteworthy was a pair feeding a fledgling near Pinetown *Beaufort* on 7 June by Evan Miller; this is near the eastern edge of the nesting range.

Northern Waterthrush: An early migrant was photographed by Matt Rivers at Fort Moultrie in Charleston on 28 July, the only report for the summer period.

Golden-winged Warbler: This species was formerly uncommon but rather widespread as a breeder in the NC mountains, but alarmingly there were just three sites reported this summer! What has happened to the many former sites southwest of Asheville, such as in the Nantahala Mountains? Global warming, loss of early succession habitats, and perhaps interbreeding with Blue-winged Warblers are contributing to this disturbing loss.

Blue-winged Warbler: As with the Golden-winged, the small breeding population in the southwestern NC mountains went unreported. Are there birders at all in summer in the southwestern counties? The NC Bird Atlas map shows no summer records at all for a four-year period (2021-24)! Global warming and decline of early succession habitats might be an issue with this species, but other factors are involved.

Prothonotary Warbler: A very rare breeding record for the NC mountains was the finding of an adult carrying food at the Biltmore Estate *Buncombe* during June (Jay Wherley). A singing bird was recorded in southern *Clay* near the Georgia line, on 8 June by Robb Brumfield; the elevation below 2,000 feet is suitable for breeding for this lowland species.

Swainson's Warbler: This is a definitely increasing breeding species across the Carolinas, and has now spread across all NC mountain counties north to lower elevations of *Watauga*. It is also spreading across the state's southern Piedmont from Charlotte eastward, and north to *Chatham* and *Wake*. On the other hand, there were just three summer reports for all of the eastern third of SC; is it declining there?

Tennessee Warbler: One was photographed at Roan Mountain *Mitchell* on 19 July by Alex Lowe-Massi, quite early assuming a southbound migrant. However, on 25 July Lauren Shepherd photographed another near Leicester *Buncombe* NC.

Kentucky Warbler: Another warbler – along with Golden-winged and Cerulean – showing an alarming decline as a breeder, this species is difficult to find in summer in many counties in the Coastal Plain and eastern Piedmont now. There were just a few reports for the lower half of each state's Coastal Plain, nearly all without comments. Reasons for the decline are not obvious, as bottomland forests and adjacent rich slopes are not overly decreasing; perhaps deer browse is an issue here, as well as issues on the wintering grounds.

Cerulean Warbler: Numbers of this warbler continue to dwindle as a breeder in NC, and as with the Golden-winged, could it disappear as a breeder within 20 years? There were about eight locales reported, south to northern *Transylvania* (Scott Angus on 16 June).

Northern Parula: Unlike some warblers, this widespread breeder seems to be increasing across both states, though it seems to be lacking along the immediate NC coast north of Wilmington.

Magnolia Warbler: A relatively recent breeding arrival to NC's higher mountains, reports for the summer seemed near normal, with a report as far south as Mount Chapman in Great Smoky Mountains NP, by Seth Buddy and others on 17 June. Late in departing were two seen by Sally Siko and Tony Orzel near Moncure *Chatham* on 1 June.

Bay-breasted Warbler: Another late departing warbler was one briefly seen and heard singing in *Buncombe* on 2 June by Ryan Goldberg and Angie Co.

Blackburnian Warbler: Another quite late bird was a male seen singing near Statesville *Iredell* NC on 3 June by Alex Trifunovic, whereas one seen at Pilot Mountain SP *Surry* NC was early, possibly a wandering bird from the mountains, on 26 July by Cody Little. Breeding season reports from the mountains seemed near normal, but notable was one recorded singing at the Walhalla Fish Hatchery *Oconee* on 9 June by Elizabeth and Jonathan Anderegg, always a good find in SC at this season.

Yellow Warbler: Still another declining breeder, Yellow Warblers were moderately well reported in the NC mountains, but the former Piedmont breeding range seems to now be nearly history, and montane numbers are far from what they were a few decades ago. Nearly all downstate reports there seemed to involve migrants, which begin to move southward in July.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: A more recent NC mountain arrival than the Magnolia Warbler, this species seems to be slightly spreading as a likely breeder, or at least is holding steady. A few singing birds were found at most major spruce-fir sites, such as Grandfather Mountain, Roan Mountain, Mount Mitchell, Devil's Courthouse along the Blue Ridge Parkway, and at Clingmans Dome.

Yellow-throated Warbler: The species seems to be reported more frequently in the NC mountains than in recent summers, and it does seem to be present at more locales now. Breeding continues at Valle Crucis *Watauga*, where Guy McGrane saw adults feeding a young bird on 26 June.

Prairie Warbler: Sadly, many reports for the middle and higher elevations in NC on eBird lists this summer contained no details and were made by inexperienced observers, almost certainly hearing a Black-throated Blue Warbler and reporting a Prairie. Thus, it is very difficult to take many reports there seriously. The species nests mainly at lower elevations and is far from common in most places.

Black-throated Green Warbler: Three were noted by Tim Miller at Hanging Rock SP *Stokes* NC on 11 June; this is presumably the eastern outpost of the montane breeding range. The montane population was well reported, even into extreme northwestern SC. The coastal population essentially sings from March to May, and thus June is not a good month for detecting birds in eastern NC and SC.

Summer Tanager: This species nests only in the lower NC mountains, but sadly eBird filters for such counties are loose (typically not a write-in) and most reports from middle elevations do not contain details. At any rate, there were no reports there north of *Buncombe*, but sadly none from low-elevation counties in the southwestern part of the state.

Scarlet Tanager: Unlike the previous species this tanager nests over the region's mountains and Piedmont, and the upper half of the Coastal Plain (at least in NC). Seemingly out of range was a male seen in *Dorchester* SC on 7 June by Alexandria Richards.

Western Tanager: Seldom reported in summer was a late and out of range male photographed by Jeff Lemons on 1 June at Nags Head; it was in the same tree as the Black-whiskered Vireo!

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Very late at a feeder was a female seen by Susan Conder in Raleigh on 11 June. A male was photographed at a feeder in *Oconee* SC on 2 June by Joe and Liz Dunkleman; the species does not nest in NC but does not too far away in NC.

Blue Grosbeak: This lowland species seems to be slowly increasing as a breeder in the NC mountains. It was found at four sites in *Alleghany*, and then farther south in *Mitchell* and into *Cherokee*. Most sites are below 3,000 feet elevation.

Painted Bunting: This species seems to be spreading into most SC counties from Columbia (city) to the NC state line; however, the birds continue very scarce in adjacent NC, and none were reported this season in *Robeson*, for example. However, seemingly out of range adult males were singing again in Fayetteville in June (Yvonne Porter) and in Raleigh (m. obs.); the latter bird has been found for three summers now but seemingly without a mate. An adult male was definitely a stray in *Union* NC on 29 July (Karen Szafrajda). As usual, there were no reports northeast of *Carteret*, the known northern breeding limits, despite numerous birds moving north later in the season and overwintering.

Dickcissel: A "one-day wonder" appeared at the Painted Bunting site in Raleigh, as photographed by an unnamed birder on 7 June. Birds on territory in that state in summer were at North River Preserve *Carteret* (m. obs.), Guilford County Farm (m. obs.), and in *Iredell* (Jack Rogers). In SC, five singing males in *Laurens* were very notable in early June (Simon Harvey), one was singing on territory at Blackville *Barnwell* on 29 June (John Patten Moss, Mac McCall), and one was singing in *Oconee* on 15 June (Steve Patterson).

Did You Know?

Full copies of *The Chat* dating back to the very first issue, March 1937, are available for viewing online. Find these and more at:
https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/chat/

The Chat
BULLETIN OF THE NORTH CAROLINA BIRD CLUB
PUBLISHED AT RALEIGH, N. C.
JOHN H. GREY, JR., EDITOR
1719 PARK DRIVE

VOL 1 March, 1937 No. 1

CAROLINA BIRD CLUB

www.carolinabirdclub.org

The Carolina Bird Club is a non-profit organization which represents and supports the birding community in the Carolinas through its official website, publications, meetings, workshops, trips, and partnerships, whose mission is

- To promote the observation, enjoyment, and study of birds.
- To provide opportunities for birders to become acquainted, and to share information and experience.
- To maintain well-documented records of birds in the Carolinas.
- To support the protection and conservation of birds and their habitats and foster an appreciation and respect of natural resources.
- To promote educational opportunities in bird and nature study.
- To support research on birds of the Carolinas and their habitats.

Membership is open to all persons interested in the conservation, natural history, and study of wildlife with particular emphasis on birds. Dues, contributions, and bequests to the Club may be deductible from state and federal income and estate taxes to the extent allowable. Pay dues or make donations at https://carolinabirdclub.org/dues. Make change of address at https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/members/profile. Send correspondence regarding membership matters to the Headquarters Secretary. Answers to questions about the club might be found at https://carolinabirdclub.org/about.html.

ANNUAL DUES

Individual or non-profit	$30.00
Family	$35.00
Student	$15.00
Sustaining and businesses	$30.00
Patron	$50.00 and up
Life Membership (payable in four consecutive $125 installments)	$500.00
Associate Life Membership (in same household as life member)	$100.00

ELECTED OFFICERS

President	Susan Campbell, Apex NC	susan@ncaves.com
NC Vice-Presidents	Christine Stoughton Root, Arapahoe NC	
	Katie Greenberg, Arden NC	
SC Vice-President	Julie Davis, Pawleys Island SC	
Secretary	Karaleah Reichart, Raleigh NC	
Treasurer	Mark Songer, Greenville SC	
NC Members-at-Large	Kevin Burke, Hendersonville, NC	
	Betsy Kane, Washington NC	
	Paul Laurent, Banner Elk NC	
	Bob Lewis, Durham NC	
SC Members-at-Large	Richard Hayes, Charleston SC	
	Jennifer Roberts, Columbia SC	

EX-OFFICIO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chat Editor	Steve Shultz, Apex, NC	chat@carolinabirdclub.org
Newsletter Editor	Steve Dowlan, Vilas, NC	newsletter@carolinabirdclub.org
Website Editor	Kent Fiala, Hillsborough, NC	webeditor@carolinabirdclub.org
Immediate Past President	Steve Tracy, Gastonia, NC	

HEADQUARTERS SECRETARY

Amanda Laurent	1800 Meadow Ave Banner Elk NC 28604	hq@carolinabirdclub.org